plainly. The young man who desires to become engaged lives with his parents; the young girl lives with her mother. The fiancé buys the fiancée with a present /mpango, nsalamu/, which usually consists of copper or ivory bracelets /nsambo, makosa/, or beads /bulungu/. The parents tell the emissary that their son is already grownup and wishes to marry a certain girl. They explain to him that they have met /kuishibana/. The emissary rises and takes the presents to the young girl's parents; he explains the purpose of his coming. Then all the kinsmen of this clan /mukowa/ meet in the hut of the young girl's parents in order to give their opinion with regard to consent and in this manner to avoid any possible difficulties which might arise later /pa kuti babâfwe ko ukusumina uyu mwaume, bekasosa limbi, fikanasa ndâ fyaisa limbi abati: ifwe tatwali ko nga twalikene mwaume/. When everyone has agreed and consented to the engagement, they tell the emissary: "We agree, let the young man come here and be betrothed to our daughter" /Chisuma naese ope, natutemwa/. The emissary rises and returns to the young man's parents' home. He tells them what has been decided /abeda no mo ere umfwila mulandu/. The father and mother tell their son: "Go and get your tree-bark fabrics which you must offer as a present" /filundu/. 584

Filundu. The fiancé's father has previously manufactured two filundu (costumes of ficus bark). He gives them to the emissary to seal the engagement alliance. The latter places them in a basket, along with the beads and other presents, and returns to the parents of the fiancée. If everyone consents again, the engagement pact is concluded. The parents of the fiancée then take possession of the presents /kulya mpango/, the maternal uncle /nalume/ takes possession of one of the two filundu, while the father takes the other costume. [262]

Engagement Banquet at the House of the Fiancé: /kutebeta/. The fiancé's parents try to obtain a chicken; they kill it. They then have plenty of flour ground. They prepare an enormous amount of mush /bwali/ and a big bowl of seasoning /munani/ with beans /chilemba/ and spinach /musalu/. This is another occasion for offering presents /kushikula/: they place one bracelet on the bwali, another on /212/ the chicken, and the beads are placed in the pitcher which contains water for washing hands. As a mark of respect the food is always covered by a basket /balakupika po/. They also invite several kinswomen, who bring food in small covered baskets /fyakupikwa/. [262] [576]

Mbusa (preparation in the forest). The women who have gone to the forest cut the flexible branches of the trees (mienge). Then they fashion a sort of termite's nest in which they hide a handful of musuku leaves. A pole is passed through the nest ... The pole supporting the termite's nest is carried by two women who sing a song in honor of the fiancée: "Mu luendo lulia lwine batebera Na chisungu chifinga cha nkuni." The children also carry bundles of firewood on their backs, after the nakalamba has first annointed them with the red dye of nkula. Then they all come back singing: "Nshimba mulya ya ngombe." The children take up the chorus: "Ngombe isho we ulele, ngombe isho kufula kocho... ." 881

Mbusa (arrival at the village). After returning to the village, they unload the clay and bundles of wood in the hut. The clay will serve to make the fireplace. In this special fireplace, lit with a fresh fire, the famous highly seasoned dish for the wedding is cooked, the namushinwa, consisting of beans, sorghum (millet), chick-peas, lentils, tubers and peas, vegetable marrow and castor. They sing: "Natukalabe Babisa, baleto ku kalaba." [342]

Mbusa (matrimonial symbols). The women put down the white clayey earth, treading it down with charcoal and the red dye of nkula. They put all of it down near the hearth. [364]

The female director of the ceremony /nachimbusa/ then brings in two baskets filled with earthenware mbusa made a long time ago and always used for the same purpose. Please note that the nachimbusa is a sort of priestess whose office is hereditary. It is her job to preside at wedding ceremonies. The mbusa which she uses represent wedding symbols and have various shapes. I was able to purchase some of these mbusa by paying a great deal. Some are shaped like bi-sexual dolls, others are shaped like small vases with spiney walls, yet others resemble flower vases, certain others look like animals, one in the form of a big snail which emits a sound resembling a lion's roar. Once the ceremony /215/ is over, the nachimbusa takes home her mbusa. When she dies, they are buried with her in her grave. During her whole life she carefully hides them in termite nests or under rocks in the river-bed. Here are the names of the various mbusa according to their form or use: chiluwe, chimundu, chimingi posa masamba, chilyobe wa ngoma, mwansa 881 793 [323 532] 552 881

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CHAPTER II

THE BEMBA DIET

Available Data.

262 A LIST of the chief Bemba foodstuffs is given at the end of this book (Appendix A). It will be seen that their environment provides them with a variety of foods—cereals, roots, pulses, green vegetables, fruit, honey, meat, fish, and salt, and they lack only one important constituent of our own dietary, namely, milk and all its products. But such a table of foodstuffs tells us very little about the diet itself. To study its composition we 146 must know the quantities of each particular constituent the individual Bemba eats in an average day or year, and this information is not yet available. The records already published of the food eaten by sample families in different villages[1] were based on rough approximations, and on observations made during a few weeks only of the year—a serious drawback where the seasonal variations are so great. Since that date Mrs. Gore-Browne has calculated the average yearly supply of the staple food available for each individual by measuring the contents of a number of granaries at harvest-time and she has also estimated the probable average consumption of one or two other foods.[2] But these calculations refer to one area only and to a limited number of foodstuffs. The data is obviously insufficient on which to base accurate generalizations as to the composition of the Bemba diet. These pages will therefore be limited to a description of the salient features of the dietary as a whole. Some of these are characteristic of the feeding habits of primitive peoples in general and are of interest by way of broad comparison with our own; others are limited to this particular area, and even to the tribe concerned.

262 All Bemba individuals can be reckoned as eating, roughly speaking, 273 the same type and quantity of food. Class distinctions practically do not exist in this respect. Chiefs certainly have a much more regular supply of food than commoners and drink very much more

[1] A. I. Richards and E. M. Widdowson, op. cit.

[2] This experiment covered 15 villages with a total population of 777 men, women, and children, and was made from July to January 1935–6. Report to the Diet Committee of N. Rhodesia, 1937 (unpublished).

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beer. In fact they often subsist entirely on the latter to the complete exclusion of solids. Their wives, children, and courtiers also eat on the average more than the ordinary family, so much so that natives describe especially lavish hospitality as 'housekeeping after the fashion of the capital' (*umunango wa ku mumuba*). But the difference is one of certainty of supply rather than of greatly increased consumption per day, and a small class of individuals only are affected. Otherwise the rich man and his poorer neighbours eat very much the same throughout the year.

Sex distinctions are not marked either. The man gets a larger share of meat or any favourite relish, but there are no foods specially tabooed to women, and I do not think the inequality is any greater than that common in many working households in this country. Age distinctions in diet are not pronounced. Young boys between 10 and 16 are probably the worst-fed section of the community since they have to forage for themselves and have no regular portion allotted to them, but even then the difference is not a striking one. Geographical variations in the food-supply certainly exist, but they are limited chiefly to differences in the amount of meat and fish consumed and not to the staple food. Therefore for all general purposes the following account may be taken as applying to the population as a whole.

Variations from Hunger to Plenty.

The most pronounced feature of this dietary is its alternation between hunger and plenty, a characteristic common to African peoples in areas where the distribution of rain allows only one season of cultivation a year, and where one staple crop is relied upon. In this territory the existence of a definite scarcity is noticed at once by the most casual observer. The Bemba constantly talk about 'hunger months' as distinguished from food months. At the end of the rainy season they regularly expect a shortage, whether it is severe or not. When the scarcity becomes marked the whole appearance of village life is changed. For adults meals are reduced from two to one a day, and beer is rarely if ever brewed. Children who seem to munch extras all day long in the plentiful season (April to October) are reduced to a single dish late in the day. In one bad year I saw cases of elderly people who ate nothing during the course of a day, and though this is not common, most adult natives can remember occasions when they went two days

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without food, and 'sat in the hut and drank water and took snuff'.

These extreme cases of hunger are admittedly rare, but it is a fact that when the supply of the staple millet is at an end, the Bemba are reduced to foods with a much lower nutritive value. The millet, of which, as we shall see, their diet is mainly composed, lasts on an average for nine months of the year only (April to November or December). Chiefs reckon to make their supply last till the new harvest and even later. In a good year some commoners would be able to do so, but I should doubt if this number ever reached more than half of the villagers in any one settlement.[1] When the staple food runs low, the only other cultivated crops available in the scarce season are edible gourds, which are largely composed of water, and small quantities of maize. Otherwise the natives rely on the bush, which provides fungi and caterpillars during these months.[2]

Thus the existence of a pronounced hunger season can be established without making any elaborate quantitative investigation. It is correlated with changes in the social life of the people which are equally marked. All activity is reduced to a minimum when food is short, and in a specially bad year garden work tends to be skimped. The direct effects of the shortage on the people's work output was illustrated in striking fashion during the recent locust raids (1933–4), when the gardens of some villages were destroyed and others less than a day's journey off escaped. For instance, at Candamukulu in April, where the people's gardens had escaped damage—they rose at six, cut trees to clear their gardens, rebuilt their houses, and gave an impression of constant activity and busyness. Sixty miles off, at a settlement that had empty granaries and ravaged gardens, the people had not yet started the work of the year at all.

[1] e.g. in Jan. 1934 at Kampemba, near Kasama, 9 out of 18 granaries were empty = 50%.
In Jan. 1934 at Mubanga, near Kasama, 20 out of 37 granaries were empty = 54%.
In Feb. 1934 at Kongo, near Kasama, 26 out of 29 granaries were empty = 89%.
The remaining granaries were nearly empty in each case.

[2] In one of the villages observed in February 1934, one family lived six days on gourds, while in another a woman who was nursing a baby fed herself and three children on mushrooms only for two days. At a third village in April of the same year, one family lived on wild spinach only for five days.

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Other activities are also affected. There is little or no dancing in the hunger months, partly owing to the absence of beer.[1] Few journeys are planned, and the children tend to play listlessly. Usually more good-tempered than the average English baby, they whimper at the slightest provocation. I found it difficult to get informants to concentrate for more than short periods at this time of the year.

The physical effects of a seasonal shortage of food on the health of a people and the growth rate of their children has not yet been investigated, but from a sociological point of view there are other effects to be considered besides the lowering of energy due to actual under-feeding which the natives themselves recognize and describe (cf. p. 50). In a society in which people regularly expect to be hungry annually, and in which traditions and proverbs accustom them to expect such a period of privation, their whole attitude towards economic effort is affected. In some primitive tribes it is considered shameful for an individual or a whole community to go hungry.[2] It is something unexpected, and to be resisted with energy. Among the Bemba scarcity is within the ordinary run of experience, and accepted as such. This fact has a subtle but very powerful effect on their ideas of wealth and their incentives to work (cf. Chap. XIX).

Composition of the Diet.

The Bemba diet is in a sense a simple one since it is composed very largely of one cereal food—the finger millet already described. The bulk of each meal consists of a porridge made of this flour, and the subsidiary foods, meat or vegetable, are eaten with it in small quantities only (about half a pound of the latter to five pounds of the former). For their nutrition the Bemba depend almost entirely on the amount of millet they are able to get, and the seasonal variations from hunger to plenty consist in effect of the shortage or absence of this particular grain.[3]

[1] No ceremonies such as initiation rites or the founding of a village are carried out in the last moon of the rains, *Katampa* (March), probably for this reason. But it is also interesting that the people give ill health and bad luck as reasons for not holding ceremonies in this month. They say: 'March is an unlucky month. Look how many people fall ill at that moon.'

[2] Cf. Malinowski's account of the Trobriand islanders, who consider hunger shameful and give all their efforts to displaying food and producing it in excess. *Coral Gardens and their Magic*, 1935, vol. i, p. 227; *Argonauts of the W. Pacific*, 1922, p. 109.

[3] Dr. Widdowson calculates that the Bemba get 73 per cent. of his calories

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As a staple food, finger millet has a high nutritive value compared to other cereals used in this area. It is far superior to cassava in protein, fat, and mineral salts, and to the white millet of East Africa both in fat and minerals. Though inferior to maize in protein and fat, it is only very slightly so, and is again superior in minerals (iron, calcium, and phosphorus). On the other hand, as has been pointed out, the supply of millet as produced by the Bemba only lasts some nine months of the year, whereas the cassava roots remain in the garden beds throughout the year and are used a little at a time as wanted, so that people like the Bisa, who live on this crop, have a regular diet throughout the year. Sweet potatoes also can be eaten at most seasons, except during the rainy months. Millet has a further drawback in that it is used for beer as well as for porridge, and though the former evidently provides a valuable source of vitamin B contained in the germinating grain, yet it is an extravagant way of using the supplies, and the Bemba are in a worse position than peoples who grow a separate cereal for the purpose of brewing.

Their next most valuable foodstuffs are the pulses, ground-nuts, ground-beans, Kaffir beans, cow-peas, &c., commonly grown by most of these Bantu peoples. These are a valuable source of protein and fat, ground-nuts being particularly rich in the latter, and this adds to their importance in a diet in which fats of all kinds are very deficient. In fact, Trapnell suggests that the nutritive value of most of these simple cereal diets of Northern Rhodesia depends largely on the amount of the subsidiary pulses grown in addition to the main cereal crop.[1] In the case of the Bemba this supply of pulses seems to be far from adequate.[2] The store of dried beans and peas lasts only a few months of the year.

[222]

For their animal protein the Bemba depend on game, fish, caterpillars, wood-lice, &c., obtained from the bush, but game is very scarce in this area, is only easily hunted at certain seasons

[146]

from this carbohydrate food, and about 5 per cent. from fat, whereas we get 40–50 per cent. from carbohydrates and 30–40 per cent. from fat. Cf. *op. cit. Africa*, vol. ix, no. 2, 1936.

[1] Report to the Diet Committee of the N.R. Government, 1937.

[2] Mrs. Gore-Browne reports that in 15 villages visited from July to January 1936–7, no householders had any cow-peas left and only one any ground-nuts. In granaries I examined in a village in the same area in September 1933, 6 out of 14 householders had a few ground-nuts, beans, and dried potatoes. In the Kasama district in January 1934, 25 out of 37 householders had no store of pulses left at all.

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of the year, and in some districts is hardly obtainable at all. Of fifteen villages visited by Mrs. Gore-Brown in 1936, four had eaten no meat at all during the seven months under observation, although these communities were settled in reputedly good hunting country. In the remaining 11 villages such totals as 13, 5, 9, and 25 small duiker had been divided. In another village where the reckoning had been made for a period of a year 40 duiker had been killed.[1] Of the three villages in which the diets have been analysed (Appendix C), it will be seen that no animal protein of any kind was eaten during the two weeks of observation in the case of one: in another it was very low.

In the ordinary Bemba village a little fish is caught in the small rivers at certain months of the year when the waters are flooding the banks or are falling again, but fish cannot be reckoned as an important article of diet except among the peoples who live on the banks of big rivers such as the Chambesi. Caterpillars are obtainable everywhere during the wet season, and make a quite considerable contribution to the animal protein of this diet.

Of the other subsidiary food, green leaves, either cultivated or wild, which form the main source of vitamin C, are obtainable for six or seven months of the year (April to September), while fruits are limited to two months (October and November). The edible gourds and mushrooms eaten as subsidiary foods in the hunger months of the year have little nutritive value.

Salt is not easily obtained (cf. p. 55). When available, about a teaspoonful a day would be spared for cooking, but it is not uncommon to find households that have been some weeks without any salt at all, and which have not been able to make good this deficiency by eating meat.

As far as it is possible to speak of the composition of the diet as a whole, generalizations based on figures collected in three villages at different seasons of the year show that the average calorie intake is 1,706 per man value per day, i.e. just over half that which is considered adequate in England and America. The fat is only an eighth as much as is usually eaten on our mixed diets. The intakes of calcium and phosphorus compare very favourably with those in England and America. Salt is exceedingly deficient at all seasons of the year. While it is impossible, for want of further information, to make direct comparisons with English scales of diet, it is

[1] A duiker might be reckoned the size of a small goat.

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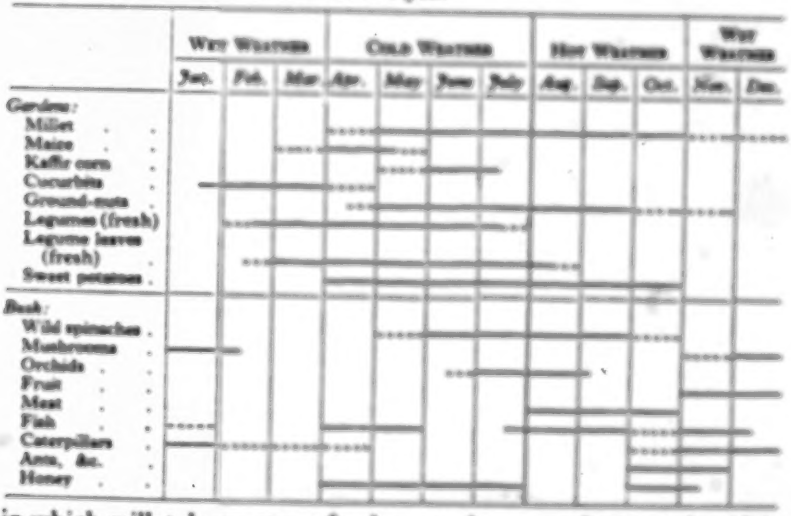
Seasonal Changes in Diet.

It is obvious, however, that the seasonal changes are so marked in this area, as in most other African tribes, that such figures of 'average' daily intake do not represent the actual situation at all. In effect the people have a harvest season from May to September

Chart showing Seasonal Changes in the Food Supply of the Bemba

———supplies plentiful. ------supplies scarce.

The lines indicate the length of time the average Bemba uses each foodstuff, either because it ripens during that particular month, or in the case of game and fish, can be trapped then, or because he has only planted sufficient for the supply to last for a given number of months. For instance, maize could be made to last for 12 months of the year, but the ordinary Bemba only grows enough to use it fresh during 2, and therefore this period only is shown by a line. Dried relishes are not shown. Caterpillars swarm at different periods in different districts and hence are marked from November to April.



in which millet, beer, green food, ground-nuts, pulses are plentiful, and meat in some areas, and the diet is therefore ample and probably varied. This is followed by a dry season (October–November) in which millet and beer are still available but green vegetables scarce or non-existent. The wild fruits are much liked, but only last about a month or six weeks. Meat and fish are obtainable in these months also, but only in certain districts. At the beginning of the rains, November and December, the diet changes. Millet is already beginning to be short, and mushrooms and caterpillars are the main standby as additional relishes. In the late rains millet

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●262 is practically non-obtainable, and gourds and occasional maize-cobs are often the only available foods. Thus the diet changes completely in composition from one season to another—a characteristic feature of primitive societies, of which the effects have not yet been investigated. Such essential constituents as are provided by the green vegetables, fruit, meat, and fish, given in the Appendix I, are only available for short periods of the year.

[146] To conclude, it can be said that most constituents considered essential to a balanced dietary are present in the Bemba environment, with the important exceptions of sufficient animal protein, fat, and salt. There is an absolute shortage of millet reckoned either by the figures of the amount available annually or from the obvious seasonal scarcity, and the natives' reliance on this one staple makes this lack a dangerous one. The most valuable accessary foods such as the pulses only last part of the year, and the supply of green vegetables is limited to a few months. Milk is never obtainable. Except in the case of meat and milk these deficiencies appear to be due to difficulties of production, storing, and exchange rather than to any particular environmental defects.

Physique and Energy.

142 It is impossible to describe the physique and output of energy of the natives living on this diet, as no medical examination of the people for this purpose has been made. Certain superficial observations may, however, be included for general interest.

Compared to the surrounding tribes the Bemba are tall and muscular, but it is exceedingly rare to find any member of the [145] tribe who is fat.[1] Girls between 16 and 18 are often quite plump, but they soon lose the extra fat and take on the angular figures of their mothers. Members of the royal family tend to be taller than the commoners, but it is not usual even to find a chief who is fat as compared with photographs of kings and notable personages among [856] the Zulu and other pastoral tribes. Babies are usually plump and well covered before they are weaned, but after that their arms and legs become skinny and their abdomens bulge in the manner common to so many African children.

[141] [1] It has been found recently that the average weight of 589 adult males *accepted* for mine work at Nkana was 127·63 lb. (9 stone 1 lb. 10 oz.), and that 8½ per cent. weighed under 140 lb. (10 stone). This lightness in weight as compared to the European average may, of course, be a racial characteristic.

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idiom. To speak of a chief is to mention before the end of the conversation his reputation for generosity or meanness in the giving of porridge and beer. To describe an attitude to any particular kinsman leads almost invariably to a comment, for instance, on the food in his granary, the number of relatives he supports, the share of meat he has asked for, or the amount of beer he contributed at the marriage of his daughter or the visit of an elder. In daily life the women, whether at work in the kitchen or sitting gossiping on their verandas at night, exchange interminable criticisms as to the way in which some particular dish of food has been divided, or the distribution of the four or five gourds of beer made at a brew. These casual observations of native life are significant. For us it requires a real effort of imagination to visualize a state of society in which food matters so much and from so many points of view, but this effort is necessary if we are to understand the emotional background of Bemba ideas as to diet.

The Perfect Meal.

To the Bemba each meal, to be satisfactory, must be composed of two constituents: a thick porridge (*ubwali*) made of millet and the relish (*umunaku*) of vegetables, meat, or fish, which is eaten with it.

(*a*) *Ubwali.* *Ubwali* is made from coarse-ground flour[1] poured into boiling water, stirred until the mixture is stiff, and then kneaded and patted with a strong wooden blade—the Bemba spoon (*miko*)—and served in the open eating-baskets which the natives call *icipe* (plur. *ifipe*) in warm brown lumps that are round in shape. There is no comparable English dish. *Ubwali* is commonly translated by 'porridge' but this is misleading. The hot water and meal are mixed in proportion of 3 to 2 to make *ubwali* and this produces a solid mass of the consistency of plasticine and quite unlike what we know as porridge.[2] *Ubwali* is eaten in hunks torn off in the hand, rolled into balls, dipped in relish, and bolted whole.

Millet has already been described as the main constituent of Bemba diet, but it is difficult for the European, accustomed as he is to a large variety of foodstuffs, to realize fully what a 'staple crop' can mean to a primitive people. To the Bemba, millet porridge is

[1] Usually finger-millet, but *ubwali* may also be made with Kaffir-corn or cassava flour.

[2] The exact proportions in one sample (examined by Mrs. Gore-Browne) were—water 60 per cent. to flour 38 per cent. The word 'porridge' seems, however, preferable to 'mush' used in some Bantu grammars.

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not only necessary, but it is the only constituent of his diet which actually ranks as food. All other foodstuffs, whatever their nutritive value, he considers merely as additions to the essential *ubwali*, as snacks to be eaten before the main meal is prepared, or as substitute foods during the hunger months. In fact, there are very few types of food which he eats without porridge, except the various gourds and pumpkins on which he is forced to live when his grain is exhausted, or sweet potatoes—a fairly recent introduction—maize, honey, and fruits of the bush. All these may be eaten freely, but are simply not considered to make a meal. I have watched natives eating the roasted grain off four or five maize cobs under my very eyes, only to hear them shouting to their fellows later, 'Alas, we are dying of hunger. We have not had a bite to eat all day'. This attitude is in complete contrast to that of most of the Southern Bantu, who live almost entirely on maize.[1]

The importance of millet porridge in native eyes is constantly reflected in traditional utterance and ritual. In proverb and folk-tale the word *ubwali* stands for food itself. When discussing his kinship obligations, a native will say, 'How can a man refuse to help his mother's brother who has given him *ubwali* all these years?' or, 'Is he not her son? How should she refuse to make him *ubwali*?' In fact, he uses the word as we do 'bread' in such phrases as 'daily bread' or 'working for our bread and butter', but more constantly, and really with better reason.

In Bemba ceremonial *ubwali* stands for food and indirectly for ordinary daily intercourse. Millet flour, meat, and salt represent the essential foodstuffs in the girl's initiation rite (*icisungu*), and at the founding of a chief's village, when small portions of each are buried beneath the walls of the Sacred Kitchen of the tribe.[2] At marriage a ceremonial exchange of dishes of *ubwali* between the relatives of the bridegroom and the bride occurs at one stage of the proceedings. A tiny lump of the porridge, made with special ritual precautions, is used to touch the lips of any individuals coming to an end of a ritual fast, whether during initiation, marriage, inheritance, &c. Further, an individual may himself announce that he is going to abstain from *ubwali* in order to show that he wishes to put himself in a special class apart from the ordinary activities of his fellows. Men or women

[1] Eaten, of course, in larger quantities and prepared as flour—'mealie-meal'.
[2] Cf. p. 482.

[Erratum, should be p. 148. — Analyst]

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262 [756] who believe themselves to be possessed by the spirits of dead chiefs (*ngulu*) start their vocation by sleeping apart from the rest of the community, and giving up porridge in favour of 'cold food'[1] (*ifyatalala*). Later, when their reputation is assured, their passage from ordinary life to the trance of possession is always marked by abstention from *ubwali*, and this fact is commented on excitedly by the rest of the villagers in some such terms as 'Look! He has stopped eating. He is only eating cold things.' It is also not uncommon for an individual who feels himself to be hurt or [626] insulted, to register his protest against his neighbours by refusing porridge in the most ostentatious way possible. There is no need in this case for him to starve completely, but merely to abstain from the staple dish. For instance, a girl, jilted by my cook in specially humiliating circumstances, ate nothing but pumpkins and gourds for four days. This was described to me impressively as, 'Look! Grief has caught her by the throat. She is refusing food.'[2] It was considered the correct conduct for a woman in such circumstances, and I have notes of similar instances on other occasions. All such examples show the extent to which, in ritual as well as fact, *ubwali* stands for 'food' in this particular tribe; and in this emotional attitude to their staple crop I think the Bemba resemble the majority of primitive tribes.

(*b*) *Umunani*. But the native, while he declares he cannot live without *bwali*, is equally emphatic that he cannot eat porridge without a relish (*umunani*), usually in the form of a liquid stew. Both constituents of the meal are essential.

About two pounds of *umunani* would be reckoned as sufficient to eat with five pounds of *ubwali*, and in fact the amount of porridge prepared varies with the supply of relish available. 'When we have little *umunani*, then we cook little porridge', a woman said, and on days when no relish was procurable, it sometimes happened that no porridge was prepared all day (cf. pp. 178–83).[3] Thus it will be seen that to improve the food-supply in this area by increasing the production of millet would be useless without at the same time ensuring an adequate supply of vegetable crops for relish.

The term *umunani* is applied to stews—meat, fish, caterpillars,

[1] This taboo is also connected with the ritual attitude to the handling of fire and the Bemba beliefs as to the impurity caused to food by polluted fire.

[2] *Moneni apa! Cikonko camuikata pa mukoshi! Akane cakulya.*

[3] Men travelling are, however, sometimes forced to do without *umunani* and this is described by a special term *ukutula*.

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locusts, ants, vegetables (wild and cultivated), mushrooms, &c.—prepared to eat with porridge. The functions of the relish are two: first to make the *ubwali* easier to swallow, and second to give it taste. A lump of porridge is glutinous and also gritty—the latter not only owing to the flour of which it is made, but to the extraneous matter mixed in with it on the grindstone. It needs a coating of something slippery to make it slide down the throat. Dipping the porridge in a liquid stew makes it easier to swallow. Thus the use of *umunani*, which to European eyes adds valuable constituents to the diet, is defended by the native on the ground that it overcomes the purely mechanical difficulty of getting the food down the throat. Some of the relishes are themselves difficult to swallow, in particular the wild forms of spinach (*umusalu*), which are stringy and often bitter. These the natives cook with ground-nut sauce (*ifwilo*) (cf. p. 95). To the European this seems to add a valuable constituent to the diet—fat—of which the supply is short in this area, but the Bemba himself explains that the sauce is not food. It is used to make the relish soft. It prevents the food 'coming back'. Meat and vegetable stews are cooked with salt whenever possible, and there is no doubt that an additional function of the relish in native eyes is to give the porridge taste and to lessen the monotony of the diet. Ground-nut sauce is also praised as bringing out the taste of a number of different relishes such as mushrooms, caterpillars, &c.

In general, only one relish is eaten at a meal. The Bemba do not like to mix their foods, and despise the European habit of eating a meal composed of two or three kinds of dishes.[1] He calls this habit *ukusobelekanya* and one said, 'It is like a bird first to pick at this and then at that, or like a child who nibbles here and there through the day.'

This habit of eating one relish at a time can probably be accounted for by the fact that there are few available choices of dish in any one day, and that the Bemba, with their traditional customs of hospitality, finish up all they cook. They do not keep a little bit of stew in a larder for to-morrow. It would be eaten by a passing relative. Nor do they plan several days' menu ahead

[1] But it is clear that the Bemba are not here implicating any modern dietetic theory, such as the principle advocated recently by Dr. Hay, that protein and starch should not be eaten together, for their favourite meal is porridge and meat.

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262 264 and so have two or three dishes on tap. Whatever the origin of the prejudice, they stick to it fairly constantly even when adopting European foods. Natives, and in particular children, who have the opportunity to buy groceries in urban districts, will sit down at a counter and eat half a pound of sugar at a time, not keeping it to sprinkle over other foods. It remains to be seen how long this habit will last in contact with civilization.

Bemba Dietetic Theory.

261 827 Besides their general ideas as to what a meal should consist of, the Bemba have definite views as to the effects of eating and drinking. Savage theories of digestion probably vary from area to area as widely as do their ideas regarding procreation, although we have little comparative information on the subject at the moment. The Trobriand islanders, according to Malinowski, eat for the pleasure it gives them, and are entirely unaware that their health and strength depend on the process.[1] The Bemba are more realistic. They are quite convinced that food is eaten to give them physical energy, and recognize the weakening effects of any deficiency. Accustomed to an annual seasonal shortage, they reckon to postpone certain heavy agricultural tasks until they feel they have recovered from the previous weeks of underfeeding, and the greater the scarcity, the longer the delay. Natives whom I asked in June why they had not yet started to clear the bush for their gardens[2] answered, 'We are waiting till the millet is ripe and we have begun to eat again—until our arms have grown strong.' A young man whom I had laughed at for not weeding his garden in the early spring shrugged his shoulders, and merely answered in explanation, 'February'. Shortage is so commonly expected at this time of year that the mere mention of the name of the month was considered quite a sufficient excuse for the lapse. The connexion between diet, and diet of a particular sort, and energy is

[1] B. Malinowski, *Coral Gardens and their Magic*, 1935, vol. i, pp. 226–8, also *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, 1922, pp. 168–72. It is significant that this is an area where food is plentiful, and where its accumulation and exchange is one of the chief economic and social ambitions of every man in the community. 'We shall eat, and eat till we vomit', the Trobriander's dream of contentment, has therefore particular sociological significance in this society. The situation is different among the Bemba.

[2] April or May would have been the more usual time to start this work. It will be seen from Chapters XV and XVIII that the hardest agricultural work actually coincides with the end of the hunger months.

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not likely to pass unnoticed in an area in which seasonal changes are so pronounced. There are also a series of words, such as *lushiegwa*, 'the giddiness of a man who is hungry', which describe the different effects underfeeding is recognized as producing.

The relation between food and a fat body is dimly recognized, although it has been stated that very few Bemba put on much weight except adolescent girls and some old chiefs. I have heard one or two natives say that food made flesh and that a man who drank much beer would grow fat, but I do not think that diet alone is held responsible for such a condition. A fat body is considered a sign of prosperity and also a state of good luck. Wasting (*ukusonda*) is recognized as a form of illness, but there is nearly always the assumption that this state is due to witchcraft or the revenge of a haunting spirit, whereas a fat and shining body shows the reverse. It betokens the man of substance and success who has kept the forces of darkness at bay, as well as the man who is well fed. There is, therefore, a definite association between the idea of plenty, a well-covered body, and the protection from sorcery. (Cf. also foot-note, p. 58.)

Most natives will give quite a full account of the digestive system. Their theory is based on anatomical knowledge derived from cutting up animals, plus their own subjective sensations during and after eating. Thus they will describe the passage of food from the mouth to the stomach (*icifu*), the intestines (*mulo*), the rectum (*inafuninga*), and its ejection as faeces (*amafi*), although they are unaware of the functions of the liver or the pancreas. But in speaking of the digestion of different foods they lay the greatest stress on the factors of which their direct personal experience has made them aware. These are chiefly three: the ease with which the foods are swallowed; the sensations they produce in the stomach, i.e. whether they melt quickly inside (*ukusunguluka*) or remain hard (*ukukosa pa munda*) or give a pain (*ukukalipa pa munda*); or whether they have good lasting power, that is to say, whether a long time elapses between the meal and the next pangs of hunger. Foods recognized as being slow to digest or 'remaining hard in the stomach' are often described as having greater lasting power than those which 'melt' quickly.

All Bemba grade their different foodstuffs in order of preference, and it is probably the habit of eating one relish at a time which enables them to do so with such clarity. The European cannot

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easily describe what he feels after eating peas, as distinct from beans, or how long each particular food will last him, but the Bemba in many cases can. After a complete change of diet, for instance, two days of meat-eating after a long period of vegetable food, he will give a most concrete and convincing account of what he believes to be going on inside him and state whether he appreciates the concomitant sensations or not. Thus a man praising porridge made of millet flour often says, 'If you have eaten your fill with *ubwali* you do not get hungry quickly again as with other foods.' He seems to appreciate the feelings in his stomach and elsewhere which the eating of porridge gives. Any one who habitually bolts the coarse heavy millet *ubwali* at the rate which the Bemba do, probably becomes accustomed to a particular sensation of tension inside. To the European this would amount almost to a pain, but it is evident that the Bemba want to feel full in just this particular way, and do not feel satisfied unless they have reached this state. Other flours, such as maize or cassava, produce a different sensation according to him. They are softer and 'melt quicker inside'. They are more suitable for invalids, but they do not give a man strength (*amaka*) or prevent hunger from seizing him quickly after the meal. Bemba, after leaving their country to work in urban areas to the south, say they find it difficult to adjust themselves to the maize flour 'mealie meal' they are given there. One old man, probably too fixed in his gastric habits to become adapted to town life, said, 'Yes, first I ate through one bag of flour and then a second. Then at last I said, "Well, there it is! There is no food to be found among the Europeans. Their foods are light"' (lit. 'small').[1] In the same way the Bemba representative sent over to England recently for the Coronation ceremony declared himself delighted by London, but complained that he had never felt full during the trip, in spite of the fact that he was housed at an army barracks and presumably ate ordinary army food. The reverse phenomenon is seen in the case of a Bemba child born in the copper belt and brought home to his mother's village in the country at about five years old. He refused the *ubwali* they gave him for several days, crying because it was tasteless, but also because it was rough and gave him a pain.

The accessory foods are also valued according to their lasting qualities. If maize is not considered as satisfying as millet, it is

[1] *Kanshi tapali fyakulya pali Batungu. Filyo fyabo fili finono.*

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said by natives to be far superior to the various gourds and pumpkins which form the alternative food at the same season of the year. Of a daughter who returned ill from a visit to relatives where grain was scarce, her mother said, 'Yes, of course she is tired. Hasn't she been sitting munching pumpkins with her grandmother?' Sweet potatoes are ranked after maize, but above gourds. Of the legumes, ground-nuts and ground-beans are described as having 'strength which exceeds that of other seed', and mushrooms and other relishes cooked with ground-nuts are said to last longer than when eaten alone. Neither mushrooms nor wild spinach are thought to give much energy. 'A man can't dig on mushrooms, can he?' I heard a man explain to a critic of his gardening activities during the months when these were the chief form of food available. The cow-pea is supposed to last longer than the bean, which in its turn is better than the European pea. Peas are described as tasting nicer than beans, 'but you get hungry again before three o'clock if you have eaten at midday'. Leaf relishes (*umusalu*) are all reckoned less nourishing than dried beans or peas. One of the best ways of staving off hunger is to eat the dish known as *icitata* (cf. Appendix A) a hard dry cake made of various legumes. Mothers say that if they give this to a child during the hunger season and then ask it to drink water so that the 'food swells inside', it will not feel the pangs of hunger for a long time. This statement illustrates clearly the Bemba theory as to what may be considered a nourishing food.

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Like a number of other African peoples the Bemba have a prejudice against eating raw vegetables, and only cook fresh greens during a few months of the year.[1] They eat nothing raw except the small indigenous cucumbers (*ifibimbi*) and sometimes *umupundu* and *umusuku* fruits, and teachers in European schools have found it difficult to introduce the eating of raw lettuce and tomatoes. This prejudice seems to be based partly on habit among a people who are prevented by the shortness of the annual rainy season from eating fresh food all the year round; partly also they have a definite feeling that cooked food is superior to raw. Such an eating habit seems to be very persistent. Dr. Monica Hunter tells me that the Nyakusa tribe in Tanganyika generally eat their

[1] Cf. the experience of the Rand mine managements that it is necessary to chop up vegetables very finely indeed and mix them in a stew in order to avoid their removal by the native employees.

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262 vegetables fresh since they live in an area with a more or less continuous rainfall. On the other hand, one of the neighbouring groups, a branch of the Ngoni tribe which trekked up north to this district from a rainless area in South Africa, continues to dry and store most of their vegetables although it is plainly no longer necessary for them to do so.

262 753 827 A good many foods are recognized as causing digestive troubles, but not necessarily avoided on that account. Hiccoughs, heartburn, sickness, stomach pains, and diarrhoea are all considered possible results of wrong feeding, although these symptoms may point to other troubles as well. For instance, forms of syphilis (*akaswende*) are believed to be due to 'things that are bad and black in the stomach' (*ifintu fibi fyafita ku munda*), and thought to be cured by strong emetics which cause the patient to vomit up the evil matter. But in so far as diet is responsible for ill health, a native will admit in cold blood that bad food, sour porridge, a sudden excess of meat, or fresh maize eaten off the cob, will produce 'pain over the heart', even though when the time comes he will not be proof against the temptation to eat them. In most cases he may have nothing better to eat, or may feel loath to throw away anything remotely speaking edible. Even an educated Bemba defended the use of putrefying meat by saying, 'Yes, it will give me diarrhoea, but that will be better than throwing the meat away'. When the new maize ripens, the people bolt the cooked grain, stripping four or five cobs at a time. I have seen them sit rocking to and fro with indigestion saying, 'Yes, it hurts on the heart, but we are glad because we are saved from hunger. The new food has come.' Natives say that sick people and children should be given gruel (*umusunga*) and soft food instead of *ubwali*, but the latter at any rate eat what they want. Gastric troubles are bound to be received with greater resignation than in our community in an area where alternative diets for weak digestions practically do not exist.

Tastes, Cravings, and Preferences.

262 Apart from grading their foodstuffs in the order of what they believe to be their nutritive value, the Bemba recognize linguistically certain tastes, and also definite cravings for specific foods probably associated with the deficiencies in their diet.

(*a*) *Tastes.* Bemba foods are not highly flavoured. Of some

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dishes they use the word *ukukauka*, meaning to be sharp and acid, like lemon-juice, in the mouth,[1] but very few acid fruits were eaten before the introduction of different citrus trees by the white man. Children eat lemons unsweetened and enjoy the bite of the acid, unlike most Europeans. The word *ukusasa* is used of foods that have gone sour or fermented, like beer a few days old, while *ukulula* describes the bitter taste of some of the wild spinaches which the women try to make more palatable with the addition of potash salts (*ifishikisa*) prepared from bush plants or ground-nut sauce. Sweet foods, in the sense of those with a sugary taste, are rare, though honey is sometimes found and is considered a great delicacy, and the stalk of the sweet sorghum (*icisale*) is chewed by children. The fruit of the *umupundu* and the *umusuku* trees are also sweetish. But sweetness in the sense that we understand it is not a term that could be applied to any Bemba dish, and the word *ukuloa* which is used to translate the English 'sweet' really means to be pleasant or palatable. Sugar becomes almost a necessity when natives have become accustomed to it, and the children brought up in urban areas where it is the fashion to use it, find it impossible for a time to eat *ubwali* without it when they are sent back to their own villages.[2] Strong tastes such as ginger root, peppermint, aromatic or hot flavours apparently do not exist, except for the pepper known as *mpilipili*, which is occasionally dried and used as a relish and described as making the mouth hot.[3] In fact, strong tastes are definitely not characteristic of Bemba diet.

(*b*) *Salt hunger*. Of the special cravings recognized by the Bemba the longing for salt is probably the most pronounced. Salt has always been hard to get in this country, and meat and other foods richly supplied with it are rare. In the old days the natural salt found in the pans at Mpika[4] and crystallized out into roundish lumps was among the few goods traded about the country. These salt balls were valued so highly that they were used as tribute to be given to chiefs, who themselves distributed them as rewards to faithful followers. To a certain extent they do so still. The process of evaporating salt from river grasses is

[1] E. B. H. Goodall adds 'salty': *Some Wemba Words*, p. 44.

[2] It is interesting to note that honey is considered bad for a sick person because it 'makes the heart beat fast'.

[3] This is in marked difference to W. African diets, where most dishes of stew are highly seasoned with peppers of different kinds.

[4] Cf. Appendix B for composition.

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laborious and the product bitter to the taste. European salt is much better liked, but it is hard to get except in districts near white stores. In distant parts of the country both European and Mpika salt are used for barter, and the traveller will notice as he gets farther and farther away from civilization that the purchasing power of salt goes up and that of money goes down. The white man's carriers are given salt in part payment for their work so that they may buy their provisions with it, and women prefer it to any other form of payment for small services. I have often found that children would rather be given a little European salt than a sweet, and they eat it neat. At Katenda's village during a period of shortage (March 1933) some children, who had been living for some weeks chiefly on gourds, picked up grains of salt from the floor of my tent with moistened fingers. Their avid faces were striking.

The craving for salt is so strong that the word itself (*umucele*) has come to have figurative meanings. In proverbs and folk-tales the husband goes to fetch salt from distant places, and this represents the fulfilment of his duties as a husband. In the girls' initiation ceremony the woman who dresses up as a mock bridegroom at one stage of the ritual, carries an imitation lump of salt over her shoulder, and small pieces are included among the sacred objects (*mbusa*) presented to the girl during the rite. In the ceremonial of founding a chief's new village, salt, together with flour and meat, are buried in the foundations of the ruler's hut. Nowadays, too, the word *umucele* is sometimes used as a generic term for European goods as being the most highly valued of these. Two old women who came to live near Kasama because of the shopping facilities there, described their motive as, 'We came to lick a little of the white man's salt'.[1]

(*c*) *Meat.* The natives' longing for meat is also almost a craving. Meat and fish are considered the *umunani par excellence* and a special word *ubukashya* is used to describe the hunger for meat as distinct from other foods. The supply of game has probably always been inadequate in this area, but the situation is considerably worse to-day. I have noticed that natives returning from the copper field, however sceptical they may be of the other advantages of civilization, are all unanimous that 'It is fine to get so much meat.' In his own country it is no exaggeration to

[1] *Twaisako kumyanga tumucele.*

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say that a native would give anything he possessed or do anything he was asked simply in order to get a piece of meat. White men get carriers easily if they are reputed to be good shots. A chief is readily supplied with tribute labour if he has a hunter able to get him meat. Each kill is the subject of universal conversation for days. Every atom of a killed beast is devoured down to the ultimate entrail, in whatever state of decay. Small shreds of flesh are dried over the fire and lovingly stored in a corner of the owner's hut, whatever the smell. Different parts of the animal are regularly graded in order of preference and are distributed according to rank or position in the kinship group. Choice morsels are strapped on bicycle carriers and carried long distances in scorching sun as presents for chiefs. I timed a three-year-old girl during the hunger season, crying for nearly two hours 'just for a little piece of meat', but it must be admitted that this was in a village near a white settlement where she must have known that meat could have been got if her parents had had the money to pay for it.

Fish is not valued so highly as meat, but it certainly ranks as the next favourite relish and it is more easily obtained. Caterpillars, which form a very common relish during the rainy season, are not considered as meat, nor do they form a favourite relish, although they must certainly be reckoned as providing animal protein.

This attitude to meat shows in a striking fashion the way in which a physiological craving easily accounted for in an area of pronounced shortage of animal protein and salt, becomes associated with all sorts of social and psychological desires. Meat is not only good to eat but it is so rare as to make a break in the daily monotony of food and life. It is a sudden unexpected stroke of good fortune and therefore means that the spirits are on the mortals' side. It means plenty and the royal way of living at the chief's court. It is an occasion for a feast. For all these reasons a village sometimes reacts to the presence of meat in a way that is quite out of keeping with its purely physiological value. This is specially the case when the supply of meat is unusually large. When a buck has been distributed in a small village, the natives claim that it is the meat itself which makes them feel strong, and keen to dance all night and to work next day. But in reality it is probably their excitement at the sudden change of diet, their pleasure at the sight of

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so much food in one community, and their relief at the unexpected appearance of relish got without the usual effort and calculation of ways and means that causes such dramatic outbursts of energy.

For instance, at Kasaka village (September 1933) I shot a large roan antelope which was divided among twenty-two adults and forty-seven children in a community where there had not been much meat available recently. There was probably more than 2 lb. of meat a head on this occasion. Now meat takes some hours to digest, but the energy (or *amaka*, i.e. strength) which the native claimed that the food gave him was shown not only before the food was digested, but before it was cooked! During the division of the animal the excitement was tense. Men and women gathered round shouting and talking. Before the meal there was a buzz of expectation. Women ground extra flour with enthusiasm, 'Because we have so much meat to eat with it.' Every one sang at their work. Young men ran sky-larking round the village, like a set of English schoolboys in a playground. Directly after the meal, the women gathered near me talking in loud voices. They kept describing with ecstasy how full they felt. 'Our stomachs are rammed tight' (*munda uauma ndi! ndi! ndi!*), said one with enthusiasm, showing with a gesture a closed fist ramming down material hard. 'Yes,' said another, 'we shall all fall asleep at once (*ukulalafye nku!*), not toss or wake at night as we usually do.'[1] A mother, pointing to a baby of two sprawling, legs wide, replete by the fire, exclaimed, 'Yes, look at him, he is so full he cannot sit up straight.' Others pulled down their cloths from their breasts to display their bellies with delight, and indeed there seemed to be quite a visible swelling of the stomach. Part of the excitement seemed connected with the fact that there was not only enough meat for that day, but that it would last till the morrow. The food was so ample that all usual rules of courtesy were put aside. 'There is so much meat that you need not wait for an invitation to join a group of your friends round a basket,' said a young woman, 'you can just swoop down like a vulture and snatch what you want and no one will care.' An old couple sitting together on the veranda of their hut, repeated with quiet satisfaction over and over again, 'Yes, and there is just as much left for to-morrow.' Another old lady

[1] Mr. G. H. Wilson suggests to me that peaceful sleep is associated with the blessings of the spirits. There may be an association between plenty of food, sleep, removal of the fear of witchcraft, &c.

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cried light-heartedly, hitting her stomach, 'I have been turned into a young girl, my heart is so light.'[1] 262

In an hour or so men and women gathered on the village square and burst into spontaneous dancing of a type I had never seen in ordinary life. Young men charged arm in arm up and down in lines singing Bemba and European songs. They imitated mission drilling and play-acting. Young girls played singing games amid screams of laughter. Drums beat, and the older women and babies clapped and shouted. It was like some wild Dionysiac rabble, and indeed these people might have been taken for drunkards, except that they were better tempered, more energetic, and showed more initiative in inventing new games. The next day, they went to work early, declaring that their arms were strong. The excitement on this particular occasion was admittedly unusual, but I have described it as an example of the extreme delight of the Bemba in the sight of meat, and of meat in such profusion that it could be used for once in an utterly reckless way. 535 [524] 152

(*d*) *Other cravings.* Old men who have become accustomed to drinking beer say that they feel their stomachs asking for beer. Elderly people also long for snuff and will go to any lengths to get even a small pinch. *Kuba no mupatikishya ku fwaka* means 'to be in a state of begging for snuff', but I do not know if this craving has any correlation with dietetic deficiencies. Pregnant women are expected to be liable to pika[2] hungers and are said to 'ask their husbands suddenly to get them such and such'. They regularly pull lumps of clay from the walls of their huts to chew, and declare their mothers taught them this custom. I have heard that some children also eat clay, but I never saw this done. 273 276 843 261

(*e*) *Monotony and diet cravings.* Most Bemba seem to be specially liable to sudden cravings for different foods during the season of shortage. Whether this is due to definitely physiological reactions or to the excessive monotony of the diet at this season I do not know. To the European Bemba meals seem insipid and tedious at all seasons of the year. The foods available are not numerous, and even then they cannot all be used at any one time (cf. Chart on p. 41). There are a number of variations in the methods of cooking known, but, as in England, many of these require too much time for their preparation as a general rule. In one village 262

[1] *Nasanguka naba mukashyana ico mutima uayanguka.*

1/1 [The division and eating of the meat from a large antelope shot by the author. - Analyst]

2/1 [Erratum, should be "pica", = craving for unnatural foods. - A.]

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262 records taken during a plentiful season showed that only five different relishes were used on an average during a period of twenty-three days. Only one cultivator had stored or gathered as many as nine different forms of *umunswi*, and he was a man of unusual intelligence. At another village in the hunger season four out of six families ate mushrooms only with their porridge for five days out of six, and this was considered usual at that time of year. Mrs. Gore-Browne states that in the thirty-two villages she visited between July and January *kasapa*, the relish made from cassava leaves, was practically the only food eaten. Whether the Bemba really suffer more severely from monotony of diet than the average English working-class family I do not know. Bread, butter, jam, tea, meat, and vegetables probably recur with the same frequency in such households as do millet, porridge and relish in that of the Bemba. Nor is it easy to know whether a monotonous diet is harmful in itself if it is well balanced, but it is certainly in times of shortage of millet that the native [435] complains of the lack of variety. At this season I have seen Bemba pay quite exorbitant prices for dried fish bought from a passing trader 'because we are so sick of eating pumpkin'. It would seem that a kind of despair had set in, and in this mood they were willing to pay anything to get a change of food, however bad the bargain they were making.[1]

(*f*) *Foods and social status.* Finally, the Bemba, like ourselves, have attached a kind of snobbish value to different foodstuffs. This is roughly correlated with the traditional beliefs in the strength and staying power of the dishes, but not entirely. As 262 presents of honour, beer may be given, unthreshed millet, meat, 431 fish, or honey. But it is almost an insult to give a man of rank a basket of maize. I once saw the late Nkula presented with such food by some villagers when travelling round his district, but he gave it contemptuously to the children of his retinue. Citimukulu also passed through a village where I was staying during a month of scarcity after locust raids. The people knew he was short of relish for his followers but did not dare to offer him caterpillars—their only supply that day—in public. His wives had to beg surreptitiously behind closed doors.

262 Roughly speaking, uncultivated plants are less highly thought of than cultivated. Some of the wild leaf relishes really are

[1] Cf. also Chap. XII on trading habits.

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stringy and bitter to the taste, but the fact that these plants grow wild also tends to make them despised. For instance the wild orchid (*icikanda*) gathered by the children in September is considered with special contempt. A passing Lunda bragging to some Bemba villagers about the superior wealth and civilization of his own people, clinched the argument by saying, 'In our country we just divorce our wives if they serve *icikanda* relish, whereas yours have to cook it every day.' The burrowing cricket (*nyense*) and the mice, moles, or small birds which little boys trap are also despised. 'Food for children and for women in the hunger months' is an expression often used of such foods with an expression of contempt.

European foods are used only in the villages round white settlements and then apparently entirely for their kudos value, or else their ease in preparation.[1] Such articles are chiefly limited to tea, coffee, sugar, bread, and sardines. They seemed to me to be eaten as extras, used for purposes of entertainment or display, rather than an essential part of the diet, but the habit may have become more common since my visit to the area in 1934. Then clerks and native storekeepers in the Kasama townships used to be carried trays of tea in the middle of the morning by their wives, and in a neighbouring village I have seen four young men, after eating their ordinary meal of porridge and relish, sit down to share a tin of sardines on a table spread in full view of the community and ornamented with empty whisky bottles. They were described as having a 'sundowner'. In the same year a successful dance club run by an enterprising native returned from the mines, sold lemonade at 3*d.* a glass (i.e. a whole day's wages) and scones made from white flour in preference to supplying beer. It is purely want of money which prevents the extension of such customs in the modern type of village.

Magico-Religious Attitudes to Food.

(*a*) *Food taboos.* The whole question of food taboos has bulked very largely in anthropological literature from the earliest days. Such ritual restrictions on diet seem to have struck the attention of European observers immediately, and there is no doubt that where a particular class of food is tabooed permanently to a whole community or to a large section of it, such as a clan, age-grade, or

[1] Bread is liked chiefly for the latter reason I think.

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262 to the different sexes, the matter becomes important from a nutritional point of view.

It may be said at once that the food taboo proper is not widely observed among these Central African people. The Bemba tribe is divided into clans named after various animals or plants, but in no case are totemic food taboos kept. In fact, in some cases the [614] clan name is that of one of the staple foods of the tribe (Besa—an archaic name for millet; Boa, or 'mushroom'). Nor does there seem to be any food tabooed to one sex or the other, or considered appropriate to any particular time of life. Certain individuals regularly abstain from one or more types of relish. [755] Such restrictions may be the result of an order given by a native doctor who may make a cure conditional on the regular observance [777] of a food taboo, or it may follow the individual's own conviction that a particular food eaten on some memorable occasion has brought him ill luck and is therefore likely to do so again. In some cases one whole family (*ulupwa*) may avoid one type of relish, but it is impossible to decide in these instances whether the individuals have a natural antipathy to one food or the other, or whether the taboo is based entirely on magic grounds.

262 Another set of taboos are observed by chiefs, in this case entirely
825 on animal food, and dependent on the belief in the magic properties
[777] of the animal. Animals with prominent lower teeth are unlucky.
[826 They are known as *ifinkuli* (sing. *icinkuli*)—the name given to children
847] whose lower teeth have come through before their upper, and who used to be destroyed on this account. Such animals include the bush-pig, the wart-hog, the zebra, and the eland. The bush-buck is also taboo to a chief because it has a mottled skin and makes a choking noise, and is therefore believed to bring danger or leprosy and bronchial troubles. The flesh of the bush-pig is also considered unsuitable since it darts from side to side, and this it is said might disturb the judgements of the chief. For similar magic reasons, pregnant women must avoid the flesh of the bush-buck, 'Because it is mottled. Does she want her child to be striped?'[1]

262 But it must be stated at once that the pregnancy taboos are not
843 nearly so numerous as among other African and Melanesian peoples, and both the taboos observed by the chiefs and by pregnant women are restrictions not on one type of food—vegetable or animal—but on one particular species of vegetable

[1] She must also avoid the *ifinkuli* and the wild cat.

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or animal. They can therefore have little appreciable dietetic importance.

(*b*) *Domestic animals.* We have seen from this account that ritual avoidances of food do not seriously affect the diet of large sections of the Bemba community. On the other hand it is not true to say that all available sources of food in the environment are exploited. The Bemba are not a pastoral people and could not keep cattle in large numbers because of the tsetse-fly. On the other hand sheep and goats are quite widely distributed in certain areas, and most households keep chickens and some pigeons. All these domestic animals are called *ifisekwa* or 'things kept', but in no case are *ifisekwa* kept primarily for meat or bred for that purpose. Goats or sheep may be given as a present to a chief or a European; dedicated to an ancestral spirit after successful recovery from illness; or given as compensation to an injured person for the loss of a limb or an eye. They may be killed and used as meat, but always on some such ceremonial occasion, never in case of pure hunger. Chickens are more numerous and less valuable, but even then a chicken is never killed 'just for food', even in the hunger season. Fowls are the ordinary present of honour for a chief or visitor of high status, and provide the ceremonial meal at a marriage or initiation ceremony. While there is no particularly sacred attitude towards chicken, a man will say, 'If I kill a chicken just to eat, I shall soon have none left.' That is to say he does not breed poultry scientifically, put down sittings of eggs, or calculate the number of chickens he may expect to get; nor does he make any attempt to feed them. Hens run about the village and lay their eggs wherever they please, and some of these sittings are finally hatched. But each new brood is regarded, with some justification, as a separate piece of good fortune for which the owner is not responsible, and which he is never certain will be repeated.[1] It is for this reason that he considers chickens should not be wasted or 'just eaten' and he will not part with eggs unless he can get money from a European for them. Teaching of scientific rearing of poultry would overcome the reluctance to use eggs. There is no fundamental magic belief at stake.

The Bemba attitude to pigeons is characteristic. These birds

[1] A number of magic rites are associated with the care of poultry such as the disposal of the eggshells at the crossroads, &c., and these may be taken as an indication of the measure of uncertainty the native feels on the question.

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262 are kept by one or two men in most villages and housed in elabor-
235 ate pigeon houses built with considerable trouble and protected with magic rites. But they are hardly ever eaten because 'People want to keep many pigeons, so they are afraid to waste the seed' (i.e. to reduce the stock). They like to see the birds flying about
235 the village. They are things kept as a sign of rank. They just
554 flutter and flutter about. They show the rank of the owner of the pigeon house.'[1] A common saying is 'The domestic animals of rich people cause admiration like pigeons'[2] i.e. they wander here and there and give the effect of countless numbers.

231 Goats and sheep also add to the reputation of their owner. The reluctance of the Bemba to kill and use them for ordinary purposes seems to be based on two different attitudes. On the one hand
[232] these people are as ignorant of methods of rearing stock as they are of poultry breeding. They lack completely any pastoral tradition, and the way in which goats, for instance, are treated, makes it little short of miraculous that any survive. The Bemba children do not herd them or look after them, and it is not uncommon for the owner to forget to let his goats out of their pen to feed. A man buys a goat or sheep as a sort of gesture, probably because he wants to acquire possessions, and he puts it in a shed, but he never seems to have any idea of building up a herd or relying economically on the sale of meat. The milk is never used. Added to this the killing of so large an animal as a goat or a sheep has a particular significance for the native, and this makes him unwilling
[782] to slaughter except for some special ceremonial reason. A goat is something approaching a human being, and is used nowadays as
681 a substitute for human sacrifices. It can also serve as a com-
231 pensation for some serious bodily injury, in which case it will probably change hands but not be killed. It is interesting that the Bemba, who have substituted money payments for many of their old religious dues, feel that a financial compensation would be unsuitable in such a case. 'It is right to give a goat because it is a man who has been hurt.' There is even some indication that the
231 Bemba believe that to kill a domestic animal might bring dangerous
776 consequences, just as the murder of a man would. In this tribe the belief that the spirit of a murdered man returns as a haunting

[1] *Fitekwa fya bukankala. Fyakupukapuka: filelanga bukankala bwa kwa cibindu[illegible] nkunda.*

[2] *Fitekwa fya bakankala fyakukumukapo fye nge nkunde.*

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ghost is very strong. In the case of a dangerous animal like a leopard or a lion special ceremonies are performed to prevent the return of its spirit. In the old days the killing of an ox, I was told, was accompanied by the words, 'Kampinda (a name for the High God) who gave us this beast, now go out of it. Go and settle in that one', pointing to another animal. I never heard this said, but to this day the Nkolemambwe, the hereditary official responsible for killing most of the beasts slaughtered at the Paramount chief's court in connexion with various rites, describes himself as being 'fierce' (*umukali*) on this account, and as doing specially dangerous work for the community requiring subsequent purification. I have heard a native say that it is bad to kill a dog because its spirit could return. 'White men are cruel the way they shoot sick dogs. It is better to tie them up in the bush and walk quickly away and let them die.' Children are sometimes afraid to kill a chicken. One said, 'It is a frightening thing to watch the breath flutter away'.[1] This attitude towards the killing of domestic animals is interesting in an agricultural people in which the ritual attitude towards cattle has not been formalized in different institutions and religious ceremonies as it has among the pastoral Bantu. It amounts to a reluctance to treat goats and sheep merely as stock to be bred and killed, combined in this case with a lack of scientific knowledge of how to do so.

Conclusion.

To summarize the Bemba views on food it must be admitted that they grade their different victuals according to fairly crude criteria, such as their lasting power, and ease of swallowing. Also habits developed in early infancy have made them used to experiencing particular sensations after eating, such as the feeling of fullness after a meal of *ubwali*. Hence other types of dishes have ceased to seem to them to be 'satisfying'. On the other hand, most of their prejudices appear to be extraordinarily sound in the particular environment in which they live. Their preference for millet flour as against cassava meal is an extremely sensible one as the chart of comparative values of finger millet, cassava, and maize given

[1] *Pakuloleshyo muntu apo umwes uleputuka cakutina.* This fear seems to be combined with a definite desire to watch pain inflicted. Most natives consider it the treat of treats to see a sacrificial animal killed, and I have always noticed that children swarm to watch a goat killed and rather enjoy a long-drawn-out death.

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on p. 409, Table B, shows. It will be seen that the millet has a protein value of 33 as against 7 for cassava and a much higher proportion of fat, thus making the former a much more suitable cereal in an area where animal and vegetable fats are so short.[1] Their scorn of maize is not, however, justified from a nutritional point of view, since it has a higher protein and fat content than the favourite millet. Habit and the additional difficulties which the cooking of maize involves probably influence them in this prejudice. The general order in which they grade their accessory foods, i.e. describing maize as giving more strength than gourds, legumes than green or dried leaf relishes or mushrooms also seem to correspond roughly to the nutritive values of these foodstuffs as shown in the Appendix B, as also their statement that ground-nut sauce, the most important source of fat in this diet, gives the food 'strength' (*amaka*). Cravings for salt and meat would probably be prophesied from a descriptive account of the deficiencies of the diet.

They do not make use of eggs and chickens, as they could do, but otherwise there are few of those ritual restrictions which limit the diet of a number of primitive tribes. The Bemba have also clearly a realistic outlook on the importance of food in relation to health and power of work. It remains to be seen whether the urban natives, under the stress of new economic and social ambitions lose this shrewd empirical sense.

[1] Compared to the Bangwenlu area where the cassava-eating peoples have an ample supply of fish and hence a more adequate amount of fat in their diet.

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853 baby a little food.' I noticed, in fact, that in a native family where the father had been taught at a Mission School that it was wrong to feed a new-born baby on gruel, he yet insisted that his child should have condensed milk as well as the breast. He was as convinced as the rest of his fellows that the child would not grow up on the breast alone, and did not want people to say that he grudged his baby anything needed for its health.

[262] Thus the native's dependence on millet porridge is a habit literally forced on him from his earliest days, in fact before he has acquired the necessary ferments for digesting the starch at all. By three or four months he has become entirely used to the gruel, and by eight or nine months he is being given small lumps of ubwali to eat by himself. This system of cramming the infant's stomach is considered by most Europeans to be harmful, and to be responsible for the protruding abdomens of all Bemba children, although these latter may be due to enlarged spleens as well as to unsuitable diet.

[165] The mortality of children between the ages of one and three is enormously high, for a variety of reasons, not only those connected with diet. It is impossible to be dogmatic on this point without further information. But it must be admitted that the Bemba infants cry less and have a more contented appearance than the children of the same age in this country.

When a child has reached the crawling age he is allowed and even encouraged to eat everything he can. I never heard a mother trying to restrict a small child's diet, but always boasting proudly about what a lot the child knew how to eat. He is given small handfuls of food in all his relations' houses, toddling from one hut door to another. Small children are always given the remains of food not thought good enough for grown-ups. Infants of under a year are fed with the beer dregs from last night's party, mothers saying with satisfaction: 'Look at that child. How strong he is! He likes beer already,' and any account of Bemba dishes includes a list of foods which 'no grown-up person would touch. Only children eat that.' In this way, therefore, the Bemba mother differs from the European with her more rigid ideas as to the digestive powers of her children.

To conclude, the characteristics of the Bemba system of infant feeding are three. First the length of the suckling period, and the complete freedom of the infant in feeding, both of psychological importance to the baby as well as nutritional, and valued by the

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cannot go so long without food as their elders and cook them extras when they can. Women who stay at home in the village all morning roast ground-nuts for the little children, or bake them sweet potatoes in season, while all the young people forage for what they can get from various relatives, or look for fruits in the bush. Mothers going to work may be seen carrying smouldering embers on a bark holder, ready to make small fires to roast maize cobs if they happen to be ripe in the gardens. But when food is short the children have to go without and expect to do so, and as they reach adolescence they begin to adopt the tribal belief that it is childish and undignified to be eating at all hours of the day. They finally express the ordinary adult preference for a meal late in the day rather than early. Some natives comment half disparagingly on the frequency of the white man's meals, although of course they admire the riches of a European who is constantly able to entertain his friends. The white man, chiefly the government official in this area, has now become a standardized figure in a series of folk-tales, and in these he is always represented as stopping constantly in the middle of any activity to take breakfasts or to drink tea. I once listened to some small boys playing at being Europeans—a very favourite game. The boy who was acting as the district officer sat lounging in an imitation chair made of branches and bark rope and repeatedly called, 'Bring food'. At last one of his fellows, acting servant, said aside in an aghast whisper, 'You can't ask for food again. We've only just brought it to you.' The 'white man's' answer was immediate. 'You know nothing about Europeans! That is just what they do all day—just sit and call, Boy! Bring me food.'

The chief meal of the Bemba varies tremendously both as to its time, its size, and the accessory foods that may be added to it during the day. These changes depend chiefly on the nature of the women's agricultural work from season to season, the monthly changes in the types of food available, and the time taken to cook them. For instance, at Pambalasa village (September 1930), the women were working late into the day to finish piling the branches for burning in their gardens. They were back late to the village, and got the single meal ready at about five. There was no early morning snack for most of them. At Candamukulu's village (April 1931), the women were harvesting, but at this time of the year the maize was ripe, and a few cobs could be quickly roasted at about 8 a.m. as well as the evening meal, which varied in individual cases

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264 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. At the court of the Paramount chief I have noticed during several visits paid at different times of the year that
262 the wives of the Citimukulu, who had very few agricultural duties, cooked small dishes of porridge for themselves twice a day, at about 10 and 4 p.m., while continuing to prepare the one big evening meal for the chief's labourers. The more detailed daily records kept at Kasaka village (September 1933) (pp. 178–83) show a decided variation in individual cases in this respect. These examples show clearly the extent to which economic routine and the seasonal changes in the food-supply alter, not only the time of the main meal of the day, but the actual daily intake of each individual in the form of extra snacks. These variations would upset many European digestions, but natives are either so used to delay that they do not feel discomfort, or else they resign themselves to the inevitable. I never heard a Bemba husband complain that his meal was late. On return from work the men sit about in
264 their club-house, an open shelter called *nsaka*, for several hours, gradually growing more listless if the delay has been prolonged, and talking in a more desultory way. They seem able to eat more at a time than we could most of us manage, and to go longer periods without. Some carriers of mine took 50-lb. loads 15 miles a day for two days eating a few gourds one day and nothing but wild fruit the next, but after this effort they lay down and rested for a few days, and presumably ate all they could get. Another set of carriers similarly burdened ate 10 lb. of cassava each in 2½ days (average ration about a pound a day), and then walked another 42 miles on about 4 dried fish apiece. They explained their action by saying, 'Our loads were so heavy that we thought, "Let's carry our food in our bellies".'[1] Such a method of dividing up a ration would probably be inconceivable to the average Englishman who is intellectually convinced of the advisability of eating the same each day, and has been accustomed in most cases to do so. It is an interesting illustration of the way in which the environmental limitations of a people's food supply, the methods of cooking they practise, their hospitality rules and general system of distribution, all act in concert to condition their appetites and digestive habits.

It remains to describe the actual consumption of a Bemba meal. To the casual observer the most characteristic feature of their

[1] *Twatile fipe nafifino, katusenda munda!* Information sent me by Mrs. Gore-Browne.

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by small insects. This may be one of the reasons for the ousting of what is apparently the older Bemba crop by the more easily stored red millet,[1] and the small quantities of Kaffir corn grown nowadays are usually reaped head by head as it ripens and eaten at once.

Maize is also eaten fresh for the most part. A basket of 30 or 40 cobs may be kept in the granary for the few dishes of dried maize eaten, or they may be hung outside the walls, or on a tree.[2] I only saw one maize granary in the territory, and that had been built by a native who had had experience of cultivation in a European plantation in Southern Rhodesia, and was experimenting with ploughed fields of maize.

2. *Ground-nuts.*

Every Bemba reckons to store ground-nuts, however small a quantity, since they are such an essential element of his diet. Men of substance build small separate storing bins about half the height of ordinary granaries, while others keep their nuts in carrying baskets with the millet crop. The ground-nuts are always stored in the shell, which probably preserves their freshness, but they are first dried in the sun. Natives make a great distinction between the fresh nuts (*shya shibishi*) and the stored nuts, which are not so succulent and juicy.

3. *Other Foodstuffs.*

The other foodstuffs used by the Bemba are only stored in small quantities of 50 lb. or less in small containers inside their granaries. The seeds of late sowings of beans, sugar peas, and cow peas are left to shrivel up completely in the sun on the garden beds and then carried home in baskets and stored. *Legume leaves* to be used for storing (*ayanakila*) are cut while the plant is still green, any time from February to April. They are then left to dry in the full sun for a day or more, when the shrivelled remains are stored in gourds or leaf containers. It will be noted that the exposure to the sun is as prolonged as possible by this method of

[1] In 1933–4 I found three chiefs with separate Kaffir corn granaries, and, as we saw, this crop is used ritually in some of the ceremonies performed at the capital, but only one commoner had a separate supply of this grain. I never saw more than about 200 lb. stored. Mr. C. G. Trapnell tells me Kaffir corn is quite commonly planted in some other areas I did not visit.

[2] The peasants of the Austrian Tyrol always store their maize in the open air.

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cooked on the same sacred hearth. It is in fact the sacred kitchen and storehouse of the tribe.

The whole institution of the *kumitembo* illustrates to my mind that close association between authority and the power to distribute provisions on which the tribal organization depends. The chief owns the food and receives tribute, and the chief provides for his subjects and distributes cooked food to them. Both these attributes are symbolized in the *kumitembo* house.

We started to discuss the use of food as a payment for labour as part of a study of domestic economics, but we have been inevitably led to consider the deep-rooted political and religious beliefs connected with this form of distribution. They are beliefs that are very much alive to-day and insensibly affect all attitudes between ruler and ruled whether white or black. The European generally gives his native employee food as well as money wages. He does so usually for the purely practical reason that he is afraid that otherwise his servants will starve and spend their money on clothes. But to the native the white man's provision of food puts him in a special relationship which is quite different from an ordinary business transaction. He becomes 'his man' in a special sort of way.

Tribal Distribution and the Individual Ration.

We have described the distribution of cooked food among the Bemba, and some of the social and economic uses to which foodstuffs are put. It remains to indicate the effect of these different cultural regulations on the daily intake of the individual members of the tribe. Briefly speaking, these are two in number. A fairly even distribution of supplies is produced in any one village on any particular day, but a great irregularity in the individual amounts eaten as from day to day or month to month.

The causes of these changes in the daily intake can be readily deduced from the foregoing chapters. The first is the varying numbers of helpers who join to form each elder woman's cooking team, giving to some ample labour for the lengthy processes of grinding and cooking, while others belong to so small a family group that they are unable to prepare a proper meal at the busy times of the year.[1]

[1] A point to be borne in mind when the advisability of establishing isolated homesteads for individual families is discussed.

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The second cause is the varying number of eaters for whom the Bemba housewife has to cater on any one day. It will be remembered that the head of a 'big house' is responsible for a permanent group of eaters, i.e. her husband, the sons-in-law still dependent on her, their wives and children, and her own unmarried children of both sexes. Besides this there is an outer ring of eaters for whom the housewife is ultimately responsible but does not always have to provide, i.e. the older married daughters who have already their own granaries, for whose families she will only cater in case of sickness, heavy garden work or brewing, or absence on visits. There are also married sons, or their near male relatives with wives temporarily away, who may or may not have to be fed. These near relatives form a constantly expanding and contracting group, and their numbers are increased by travellers on long or short visits and workers in the householder's garden. Besides which the cooking of dishes as a form of compliment adds to the catering difficulties. I have known the numbers fed by one woman to vary from five to fifteen a day in the course of one week.

In a chief's village the head wife has an even more complex task, as she may have to organize the feeding of bands of twenty to forty *umulasa* labourers, several councillors on tribal business, royal visitors, as well as on occasion the whole tribal council numbering some forty men with their wives and retinues.

The chief's wife may know in advance the days on which she has to feed workers or members of the council, but neither she nor the commoner's wife usually knows until late in the day how many extra kinsmen or visitors will have to be fed. For this reason it may be impossible for her to do an extra hour or two's work to grind additional flour. In such circumstances the same amount of food has to be divided among a larger number of people, so that each gets a smaller share, and much of the irregularity in the daily intake is due to just this fact.

Even in those cases where it would have been possible for the housewife to cook a larger dish, there may be a number of reasons why she may be unwilling to do so. These are based on her conception of her obligations towards her kinsmen in general, her power of calculation, and her views as to the desirability of regular meals. It is obvious that if the owner of a granary has to make her supplies last from one harvest to another, while at the same time carrying out her duty to feed a wider circle of relatives than

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262 is customary with us, she is only likely to succeed if she cooks more or less the same amount of porridge each day, however large the number of eaters. In fact, this is what she does. Moreover the Bemba woman does not appear to calculate her supplies, consciously at any rate, on the basis of a fixed amount of food per person per day, nor has she ever fed people out of separate vessels, so that it is unlikely that she has a visual image of an average or suitable portion of food for each eater as has the English woman accustomed to taking a similar-sized helping on to her plate at each meal.

The Bemba usually take out of their granaries one of the ordinary eating-baskets of unthreshed millet (about 5 lb.) or for a big household a winnowing basket (about 10 lb.). In very exceptional circumstances they will take two. The Englishwoman rings up her husband to ask him anxiously if he is bringing home two extra guests to supper or three; the African woman will make the distinction more roughly between a 'great many' people or a 'few'. Unaccustomed from youth to expect regular and similar meals each day, she treats the appearance of visitors with less concern.

The effect of the Bemba methods of distribution on the tribal dietary have been shown to be pronounced. It may therefore be asked whether the introduction of a European system of housekeeping is likely to produce great changes in this respect. There is a widespread idea among white people that the adoption of the individual household would be a great forward step for the African. It is even considered to be a moral advantage to the native to be encouraged to acquire a feeling of sole responsibility for his wife and his own offspring. The European way of life seems to us to promise a race of thrifty, enterprising, hard-working natives, while their own condemns them to remain in their primitive state. From an ethical point of view there is in fact little to choose between the two economic systems. The older Bemba accepts far wider responsibilities for his kinsmen than his counterpart in this country, while the younger one undoubtedly does not. But in actual fact a number of Bemba near European towns are already living an individual family life, and therefore apart from the moral value of the one system as against the other, the changes in their whole nutritional situation are important to describe.

262 In such modern villages there are two factors to be considered.
184 One of these factors is the isolation of native families and the other

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the gradual adoption of the use of money for the purchase of fo[illegible]. Both make for inequality in the standards of living as between household and household, which are not found in any rural village. Where a housewife lives alone with one or two married daughters instead of being a member of a closely-knit kinship group under one headman, she has less obligation to share. Where she buys her supplies with money, at any rate for part of the year, she considers herself free of all the tribal rules of division. Thus, in Kungu village near Kasama, I have seen a young couple eat meat alone while almost starving neighbours looked on. They shrugged their shoulders when questioned, and said, 'We bought this meat with money.' I have also seen beer drunk by men alone with no guests invited, even though the act was disapproved of. The effect of such new customs on the diets of different families is shown in the records I collected. Thus, in this area, one family spent 7*s.* 6*d.* a week on food, and their diet included 17½ lb. of meat, 2 lb. of tripe, and beer; another family spent 3*s.* 6*d.* a week on food, eating caterpillars, chicken, fish, and 4 lb. of meat; while a third household spent nothing on food and only managed to procure pumpkin, green leaf relish, and 1 lb. of meat during the week. In another village one woman had an average of 3 lb. of flour a day in the hunger season, and bought 2 lb. of butcher meat, while next door an old woman supporting a granddaughter lived for six days on gourds, some picked long before they had reached full size, while another ground up her seed millet into flour.

This inequality as between family and family much more nearly resembles conditions in our own society, and appears to be the necessary result of the adoption of a money economy. At present there is of course the added difficulty that individual housekeeping has begun to exist without any previous organization of trade, specialization of urban and agricultural workers, or regular possibilities of buying food. Thus the families in these communities are at present in an intermediate position—they do not have to share their supplies as do their fellows in the bush, yet they are much worse off during the hunger months, since they cannot rely on their kinsmen for support. Although it appears that most Africans must ultimately adopt the European system of economy, the encouragement of the single family household, before a system of trade has been established, might well lead to disaster.

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cloth or blanket during the past year,[1] whether through a gift from a son in work at the mines, the payment at a daughter's marriage, or the sale of beer. One had been able to employ two young boys to cut trees for him through the generosity of an absent nephew. For the rest, these older men lived from harvest to harvest without using money at all, and their position is typical of their contemporaries all over the district. The four men employed at Shiwa Dandu were regularly earning 10*s.* a month, while most of the others had worked for two to three months at a time locally to earn their tax and to make small extra sums for clothes and other European goods. Three had used, or were using, paid labour to make their gardens. One, an unusually intelligent cultivator, had paid his tax by the sale of vegetables to Europeans, and three had made a few extra shillings with beer. It is doubtful whether on an average the men of this village handled more than 25*s.* a head during the year, of which 10*s.* went in tax.[2] In a community with fewer opportunities for work locally, this sum would probably be smaller.

As regards its food-supply, the village was in a fairly satisfactory position according to Bemba standards. Its gardens had not been destroyed by locusts, and at the recent harvest the average figure for the contents of its sixteen granaries was 2,804 lb. of millet. At the time of observation, about three months after the reaping and storing of the grain, the supply was still adequate and caused the people no concern. Beer was brewed seven times during thirty-two days and two gourds were brought into the village as presents. These figures show that the millet-supply was quite sufficient, and if the people went short of *ubwali* it was because the women could not or would not cook it, and not because of its scarcity.

The relish situation was quite different, and it soon appeared that the provision of *umunani* was the chief difficulty of the housewife at this particular season of the year. The garden vegetables were over. The mushrooms would not appear for another two months, and though there were stored legumes, &c., to fall back on, there were such small quantities of these available that housewives were afraid to use them frequently for fear they would not last till the end of the season. This left nothing for relish but wild spinaches or *icikanda* orchids—food that had to be hunted

[1] At a cost of about 5*s.*

[2] The tax has since been reduced to 7*s.* 6*d.* per annum.

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621 for in the bush some way off. The shortage of relish would
• 262 have been more pronounced in the ordinary course of events than it actually was during my visit, for since the village stood in good game country, my party was able to provide three large buck for distribution among the inhabitants. The meat orgy described on pp. 158–9[3]A occurred in this village.

The Composition of the Village.

621 Kasaka was a Bemba village built in what was originally a
624 Bisa district. This part of the country[1] had been conquered by the Bemba under a former chief Mwamba shortly before the arrival of the Europeans, and he, according to the usual practice, had left a number of faithful captains and followers to hold the occupied territory for him, the forefathers of the present Kasaka being amongst them. The latter still spoke of himself as almost a stranger in a foreign land, and traced his origin from a district in the heart of the Bemba country about six days' journey away. Marriages between the Bemba and their conquered subjects had always been common, however, and a number of the inhabitants of the present village were plainly of Bisa stock,[2] and some even described themselves as Bisa.

The village itself was of fairly long standing as Bemba settlements go. The first Kasaka (Kasaka I on the accompanying chart) had been 'given a village' in 1914 by the then chief Mukuikile. He died in 1924 and was succeeded by the present Kasaka (Kasaka II), his younger brother, then a middle-aged man living at Mpika some sixty miles away, in European employment. The heir returned to his brother's village to mourn, to inherit the name, the spirit, and the hereditary bow of the dead man (*ukupyanika*), and finally, one of his widows. He had then to wait to see if his personality and prestige were sufficient to enable him to build up a village of his own. In all Bantu societies it is usual to find a delay of a year or so between the burial of a man and the final settlement of his succession and inheritance, but the Bemba kinship system allows such freedom of choice of residence to a dead man's relatives, that it remains for some time an open question as to whether his successor will be able to hold the remains

[1] The territory of Mukuikile, a sub-chief of Nkula.

[2] Slight differences in the religious and magic rites practised in this area seemed to be the only distinguishing marks.

[3] [Erratum, should be pp. 58–59. - Analyst]

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621 clearly illustrated by the structure of Kasaka. If a split were to occur in the future it would be likely to affect the more distant members of the family, i.e. Groups E and F, or the middle-aged householders, the fathers of growing families, such as Chambesi (D_4), Nselela (C_4), Mutaka (B16), or Pensulo (E_4), who had come from outside to marry into the village, but who might now consider themselves of sufficient standing to be able to take their children elsewhere if they wished to do so. In fact, Chambesi asked permission to remove his wife and children to a new village set up by one of his relatives during my visit.

The growth and consolidation of a village group by means of intra-village marriages, whether between cross-cousins or not, is also illustrated on the chart. Among the fourteen young couples in Kasaka, there were eight cross-cousin marriages (A_4–B_4; A_5–B_5; B6–D11; D10–F_5; A6–F6; B8–E_5; B9–E_4; C_7–C8;), of which four took place within the village.

The Village Food-supply.

•262 The daily food consumption in the village and its preparation and division will now be described and should serve to illustrate, by concrete example, the different methods of food distribution already enumerated.

In any such sketch of an actual community, the individual characters, with all their temperamental and physical peculiarities, and the dramatic incidents of everyday life, seem to stand out in bold relief, while the formal patterns of kinship, which we have just described, fade from view. We are watching a number of people who like or hate to share their food, or to prepare it in common, and not plotting a system of relationships on a kinship chart. But this is, of course, how the scene appears in the context of everyday life. The abstractions of the anthropologist are based on two types of material: viz. statements of natives as to what they believe they do, ought to do, or would like to do, and his own observations of a number of human beings of widely different personalities, reacting to a set of tribal rules in different ways—conforming to them or rebelling against them. A concrete account of the distribution of food in three family groups will not only enable the reader to visualize the whole process, but will give him an idea of the kind of observations upon which these generalizations have been based.

2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
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Calendar of Events.

The weather during the month of observation must first be described, since this naturally affected the food available and the energy of the villagers. It was typical of September in this part of the world, a month of change between the end of the cold season and the beginning of the hot season. In the first week driving winds blew and the sky was often cloudy and sometimes grey. On one day the men declared it too cold to go off to their tree-cutting, and on another the women waited to grind till late in the morning because, they said, their hands were cold and slipped on the stone. The dead leaves had already fallen, and the forest turned crimson with the new young growth. It became hotter and the people more languid. Children sat about in the shade at noon and seemed too tired to run or to play violent games. There is a curious air of suspension about a native village in the hot weather. Women sit inside their hut doors and talk interminably in low murmurs, and the young girls lounge in groups of four and five in the shade and throw round polished seeds up in the air and catch them on the backs of their knuckles, a game which they play by fits and starts in a desultory way. One asked me to talk to her 'because of the boredom that is in a village when the weather is hot'.[1] By the 18th hot winds had begun to spring up, and on the 26th the first shower of thunder-rain fell. The wet weather set in in earnest in November. These notes on the climatic changes of this month should be considered in relation to the work done by the villagers during this time (cf. Chap. XVIII). I believe the slackening off of labour in this month is not only caused by uncertainty as to the coming of the rains, but also lack of energy due to the sultry heat.

Details of the activities of the people are set out below. This calendar is intended to give an impression of the work of the community as a whole, and any events such as a beer-drink or the killing of a buck, which affected the food-supply of the village.[2] Some of the notes, particularly those on the work done by the men, are unnecessarily full for a study of the food-supply proper, but they are included here in order to give some idea of the irregular

[1] *Citendwa ca mumo mushi pa luzuba.*

[2] From 13 September to 1 October notes on the work of each member of the village were taken. Before this time, general observations only.

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fatigue of the old women left alone to housekeep with their daughters away. On nine days meat was eaten and a whole buck was divided on one occasion. The other fortunes and misfortunes of the kitchen affected individual households alone.

Three Families Housekeep.

To illustrate the preparation and distribution of food in detail, three matrilocal family groups have been selected for description out of the five observed. These are: A, B, and D, and the linking of the different households composing these units is indicated on the plan on p. 177 by dotted lines. The amount of food consumed by each unit is roughly shown on the tables on pp. 178–83 and it will be seen how, in each case, the size of the consuming group, the labour-supply, male and female, and differences in the social status and individual temperament of its members affect the daily intake of food.

Group A. Kasaka, the head of Group A and headman of the village, had three households under his care. He lived in his own hut with his wife NaMarya (A2). His three younger children, Kapea (A7), a girl of 14,[1] Marya (A8), aged 7, and Cileshye (A9) aged 5, came to eat, but not to sleep. Kasaka had his own dish of food, to which he called one or two of his old cronies, such as the heads of Groups B and C, joining them on their verandas in turn. His small son might have been invited to share the meal if his table manners had not disgusted his father, and so he remained eating with his mother and sisters instead. The second household of the group was that of Kampamba (A5), who was temporarily on a visit and whose husband was away at the mines. In the third house lived another daughter, Kampamba (A6), who had been married over a year. She had been given her own fire-place but not her own granary, so that her husband, Findee (F6), was still entirely dependent on his father-in-law for food. Usually a basket was sent to him at the men's shelter, but on five days out of nineteen his wife was given flour to cook for herself, or to carry out into the bush for his meal. In the fourth house lived Nakulu Marya (A3), the crippled old mother of

[1] Kapea engaged herself to be married to a young boy from a neighbouring village during my visit and demanded grain to grind for him, but the father refused, as the marriage had not received the formal consent of the bridegroom's parents. The boy was therefore merely allowed to share a dish with the other son-in-law and was not treated with the 'cooking of honour'.

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NaMarya. The permanent group of eaters was thus composed of two men, four women, and three children, and provision for them depended on the amount of labour the group could supply and the energy and intelligence of its members.

Kasaka himself was a dignified old man, conscious of his royal connexions and a supporter of the traditional etiquette. He was a hard worker, who went out alone to garden on twelve days out of the twenty recorded, but as a character he had little force. His authority in the village was weakened by his fluctuating allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church, which prevented him from performing the customary rites to the village spirits in any whole-hearted way.[1] To help him, he had only his son-in-law Findee, who had cut trees for him for four years before marrying his daughter Kampamba, and who was making a garden of his own this season for the first time. Findee was a satisfactory son-in-law as young men go nowadays, but it will be seen that he only worked exactly half as many days as his father-in-law during the fortnight when notes were taken. Kasaka's other son-in-law sent financial support on occasion, as did his absent sons, but did no garden work. This is a typical situation in a modern matrilocal group, though it is probable that if Kasaka had had a stronger personality, a number of his dead brother's relatives, including his chief wife, would not have left him for the neighbouring village of Stefano, and he would have commanded at least a day's labour on his garden from his own villagers, according to tribal custom. As it was, he paid for their help with beer brewed for a working-party. It is common nowadays to find headmen trying to give the hospitality expected of their office without possessing larger supplies than commoners. At the time of observation Kasaka had two half granaries full of millet, i.e. about 4,808 lb., an empty ground-nut granary, a carrying-basket of maize cobs, and one of ground beans, with 4 or 5 lb. of beans, peas, dried leaves, and dried potatoes only. Thus he had a better supply of millet than most of the villagers, probably owing to the help of an active son-in-law, but very few relishes.

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The fact that mainly determined the amount of food eaten during the period noted was the shortage of female labour. There

[1] Some of these rites were undertaken by his eldest sister NaMukonda (B2), but he disliked the fact that she officiated and occasionally resumed control.

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262 592 was only one young woman able and willing to search for relish and to do much grinding. Nakulu Marya was crippled with age and rheumatism, and a burden on the group rather than a help. NaMarya herself was elderly, frail, querulous, and constantly anxious. She was a poor organizer and lacked social support in the village into which she had married as an inherited wife, and 607 she had no relatives of her own except her old mother. She was 262 criticized by the women of Kasaka's family, and as always happens 592 in such a situation, rumour had begun to saddle her with some of the misfortunes which had recently fallen on the village.[1] The difficult relationship between a man's wife and his sister, inevitable in a matrilineal community, was intensified by the clash of temperaments between NaMarya, who was weak and timid in character, although technically the senior as the headman's wife, and NaMukonda (B2), domineering, efficient, and sharp-tongued, with a large family of sons and daughters in [579] support. Jealousy, concealed beneath the surface, broke out violently from time to time, culminating in a fight between the two women at a beer-drink which sent NaMarya off for two days to sleep in the grass shelter near her garden with her old mother because she feared that 'her heart would get hot again' and she might again abuse her husband's sister—a bad breach of Bemba kinship sentiment.

262 592 Thus, both the temperamental peculiarities and the social position of NaMarya made catering a burdensome task for her at a time when relish was hard to find, and as the wife of a headman she had to dispense additional hospitality. The heads of the other matrilocal groups, e.g. the sisters NaMukonda and NaKabanda (B2 and C2), would help each other when they were rushed with work, but NaMarya could only rely on her daughter Kampamba (A6), a quiet, steady girl who took her full share of the work when present, but who gardened four days out of twenty and went fishing, looking for relish, or carried meat to Shiwa Ndandu for a European employer on five days. Kapea, the 14-year-old girl, was intelligent and lively, but did not work. NaMarya was afraid to scold her for a characteristic reason—she

[1] e.g. people said that the failure of the hunting ordeal at the founding of the village had been due to NaMarya. She had not remained indoors all day as behoved a headman's wife on such an occasion, but had gone abroad visiting. They complained that she did not bother herself (*ukusakamanya*) about the village. Charges of witchcraft frequently result from a situation of this kind.

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feared her husband's sister would take the girl's side.[1] Thus the attitudes resulting from the tribal kinship pattern were emphasized by the contrasting personalities of the two women concerned. As a result of this domestic situation NaMarya devoted her time to making beer, which she declared was less trouble than fetching relish and a good substitute for food. She only went to garden four days out of twenty. On five days Kampamba cooked for her, but when the latter was away, the family did without.

The extent of a headman's hospitality can be seen from the chart on pp. 178–80. The total man-value of those fed by NaMarya varied from 3·6 to 10·8 and the number of eaters was constant on very few days. The seven mourners who came to wail the sudden death of a baby were the headman's responsibility. Honoured guests, 'sons of chiefs', and relatives of Kasaka who arrived on the 14th were given a hut specially cleared for them and a basket of food apart. A Mission teacher appeared on another day and also a stranger, who did formal obeisance in front of the headman's hut. In these circumstances it will be seen that the individual intake of flour varied greatly from day to day, i.e. from 6 lb. per head to 2 lb. The number of meals per day altered with the cooking strength of the group. On three days out of twenty no proper porridge meal was cooked because Kampamba was away doing tribute labour or working with her husband in the bush gardens; on one day Kasaka refused to take his share of the meal because there was not enough for the guests; on four days there was only one meal in the afternoon; on seven days, one meal plus an extra dish of potatoes in the morning, and on the remaining four days, two proper meals. Beer was drunk by the elders of the party on seven days, but not by the children. The figures for this family, therefore, illustrate the irregularity in daily intake due to the tribal system of hospitality and the variation in the number of meals caused by cooking difficulties, but the special problem of this group was its shortage of female labour and the inefficiency of the housewife in charge.

Group B, that of Malalo, provided a perfect example of the expanding ring of interdependent households which may form a matrilocal cooking unit. In the central hut Malalo lived with his wife NaMukonda (B2) and a varying number of his grandchildren, generally Sampa (B13), a boy of 9 and Ruti (B14) a girl, aged 8,

[1] A period of revolt and laziness seems typical of Bemba girls at this age.

262 592 262 574 592 262 592 [883]

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the children of Mukonda (B3), the eldest married daughter. Mukonda had her own granary and garden, but sent her younger children to sleep with the grandparents after the Bemba custom, and usually to eat with them. She was economically independent of Malalo, but shared in the food of the parent household when absence at Shiwa Dandu with her husband prevented her cooking, or when she was tabooed from doing so. Malalo's second daughter, NaMutale (B8), was still completely dependent on the central household. She had been married over two years and had a small son of fifteen months. She had been given her own fire-place, and as will be seen, got grain to grind and cook for him separately on several occasions during this month. She was once allowed to take millet to brew beer in her own hut,[1] but she had no granary of her own and her husband was a ne'er-do-well who seemed in no hurry to make his own garden. Thus NaMutale cooked and ate with her mother while her husband and baby were also fed from the central household. Jani (B9), the youngest daughter, had only just married and had not yet been given her own fire-place. NaMukonda, a stern critic and disciplinarian, declared that she was 'not old enough to take food from a granary' (cf. p. 125) and would only waste the supplies and find herself 'hungry in the rainy season'. Accordingly, Jani cooked and ate with her mother, and her husband, Dickonsee (E4), was fed by his mother-in-law when he came home for the week-ends from work. Thus in Group B we see three married daughters representing the three stages by which a Bemba girl attains independence from the parent household—first a fire-place, then a granary, and lastly complete freedom of ownership. Besides these households a number of other relatives formed an outer ring and occasionally received food from Malalo. These included his eldest son Japesi (B4), an unpopular, tedious person, who had been deserted by his wife (A4) and had therefore returned to his mother for support. She cooked for him throughout our visit and would no doubt have made use of his half-empty granary if necessary. Two other sons of Malalo (B6 and 7) had married in the village and were resident there, and though they were fed by their respective mothers-in-law, NaMukonda occasionally sent them baskets of food or invited them to share beer. She also sent flour to her sister NaKabanda (C2) when the latter was too tired to grind. Her young son, Kampamba (B10), aged

[1] Giving one gourd to her mother and keeping one for herself.

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15, slept in his own hut with friends and hung around the young men's *nsaka* for remains of food, but once or twice received a special dish of his own. Thus NaMukonda cooked for three men permanently, for two additional sons-in-law in emergencies, and sent presents of food to two sons when she felt inclined. Two women regularly ate with her, with an additional married daughter on occasion, and a varying number of grandchildren. It is improbable that she would have kept together so many of her children's households, including those of her three sons, as well as her daughters', if she had not had so pronounced a character. Malalo himself was a quiet little nonentity, who played second fiddle both in his house and out of it, but NaMukonda has already been described as an incisive personality. She was a good organizer, who met each domestic emergency with calm decision and who kept her large family in wholesome awe of her sharp tongue. Her withering comments on the follies of the present generation were a constant delight to me. They were uttered with a shrug, a lifted eye-brow, and a glance of understanding as though between two adults alone in a nursery of tiresome children. NaMukonda's social status in the village as a resident of old standing, the eldest sister of the headman, and the mother of a large family gave her added advantages, in addition to her strong character. It was significant that her house was always referred to as 'at NaMukonda's' (*kwa NaMukonda*) and not, as would have been more usual, 'at Malalo's'.

To feed this family, Malalo had one granary containing about 2,272 lb. of millet and only 2 or 3 lb. of dried peas, potatoes, and beans, but if in distress he had possibilities of help from his oldest son-in-law Mutaka (B16) and also rights over the granary of his son Japesi whom he was supporting. The latter, who possessed the only village gun, brought home any game he shot. Gideon (B6), the third son, was employed as an assistant to a white man's hunter and also gave occasional presents of meat to his father and mother, so that the dietetic situation of Group B was a good one. It will be seen how the addition of each extra supporting household strengthens the position of the whole family.

As regards the labour force available, Malalo himself was industrious, but without much physical strength. He worked in his garden on twelve days out of twenty during my visit. His oldest son-in-law Mutaka owed him no further service, but made his

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262 592 garden close to that of Malalo so that his wife might be happy working with her mother and sisters and might get additional help in this way. The youngest son-in-law, Dicksonee (E4), had done two years' work for his wife's family before marrying Jani, but was now working locally for a European and only returned from time to time to do gardening.

593 177 The last son-in-law, ShiMutale (E5), was an interesting character, as he represented a special type of graceless good-for-nothing found in the Bemba country to-day, a young man who gets all he can from his wife's people under the old system of kinship obligations, but gives little or nothing in return. ShiMutale was always elegantly dressed in a spotless white shirt, frequently washed and ironed in public. He was constantly parting and arranging his long hair in a small mirror according to the latest fashion, and spent most of his time lounging in the *nsaka*, playing with his baby son or twanging a Bemba lyre. His most active amusement was bicycling madly around the village swearing at the children in English, of which language he knew no other phrases. I watched him from my tent door during this month, and I must admit that I had not believed it possible that an active young man of about 25 could have done nothing so consistently for so many days on end without feeling the time drag. ShiMutale had at one time worked for Europeans and sometimes announced his intention of doing so again, but in the meantime he stayed where he was. He had paid no *mpanga* for his bride, claiming the cross-cousin relationship as an excuse for not doing so, and as will be seen from the table, worked exactly six days out of twenty as compared with his father-in-law's twelve.

This case is described in detail because it illustrates the way in which a certain number of young Bemba contrive to shirk their marriage obligations under modern conditions, and thus place a heavy strain on the economic resources of the matrilocal group. They do so usually on the plea that they are resting after their work at the mines, or are about to take other jobs 'soon', and they are able to flout their duties with impunity, since the shortage of men in the district makes parents willing to put up with sons-in-law whom they would never have tolerated under the old régime. A quarrel which broke out between ShiMutale and his wife during this month illustrates this fact, and also shows clearly how the period of matrilocal marriage acts to a

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to which the matrilocal group is subject nowadays, the parents' tolerance of unsatisfactory sons-in-law under protest, because 'there are no men in the country', the less strict tribal standards of wifely conduct, and finally, the unstable character of marriages in which no service has been done, or *mpango* paid.

As regards its cooking team, Group B was well supplied with labour, efficiently organized by NaMukonda, and it was possible to see the matrilocal group functioning as it should as a means of training the young housewife in her work of cooking and distributing food. NaMukonda had two active young women to help her (B8 and B9)) and refused to cook for her grandchildren on one occasion unless they also helped by digging up the potatoes in time.[1] She herself, unlike most of her fellow villagers, had finished piling the branches in her own garden, and though she worked on eight days out of twenty helping her daughters in their gardens, she never failed to cook because of her garden work. The labour problem which was so acute in the case of Group A was thus not a difficulty for Group B. Nor did NaMukonda seem perturbed by the appearance of extra visitors. She entertained travelling relatives, sent food to additional members of the family, and her grandchildren, if not actually all fed by her, were running in and out of her hut all day picking up food or digging up potatoes from her beds—a situation which did not occur in Group A. NaMukonda affected distress at the children's raids, but plainly loved to have them with her. 'Little crocodile!' she would say proudly of her favourite, the 8-year-old Ruti. 'She snaps at everything in the hut.'

The total man-power value of those she fed varied as much as in the case of Group A, i.e. from 5·2 to 11·6, but the amount of flour eaten per head showed a larger variation, i.e. from 0·4 to 1·3 lb. This family had a proper meal every day out of the twenty,

leshye (C8), who was beaten quite severely and without cause by her husband Yolam (C9) when in his cups. On this occasion Group C refused to cook for the son-in-law for three days, until NaKabanda (C2), realising that Yolam was a satisfactory son-in-law in other ways, said, 'Shall we refuse food to one of the family because of a matter of beer? No! Let him share with us', and sent her daughter back again. But Yolam was still uneasy, because he had no small coin with which to compensate his wife and declared he was afraid of 'the things his wife was thinking against him in her heart'. This means two bad quarrels between husband and wife in one month, and out of ten young couples.

[1] Her middle-aged son was also punished in the same way when he passed what she considered captious criticisms on the cooking of the greens.

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and ate one meal on five days, one meal and a snack on nine days and two meals on the remaining five.

It will be seen, therefore, that in the village of Kasaka which had a fairly plentiful food-supply, the daily consumption of millet did not fall much below the average for the district (cf. Chap. II), but there were great variations in the amount of food consumed daily, owing to such factors as the universal shortage of vegetable relish, the sudden appearance of meat, the amount of beer brewed, and the absence of the young women doing tribute work for the chief. There were also striking individual differences in the amounts consumed per head in the families observed. These variations can be accounted for by differences in the individual initiative and intelligence of the housekeeper, as in the case of Group A and Group B, in the amount of female labour available, or in the number of relatives or visitors entertained.

The distribution of food outside the permanent consuming group is shown in the case of hospitality given by all three groups to strangers, the anthropologist's servants, visiting teachers, &c., and the extra help constantly being given an outer ring of relatives in the case of Group B.

The record of the number of eating-baskets sent to the men's shelter daily shows in a striking fashion how the custom of the formal presentation of food to the sons-in-law affects the daily intake of each man. The village plan on p. 177 illustrates diagrammatically the dependence of the daughter household on the 'big houses': i.e. A3 and A6 are fed by or with the inmates of A; B3, 4, 7, 9 depend on B; C3, 5, 7 on C; D3, 6, 11 on D; while E2 feeds her mother E; and F1, F2 and F3, three sisters, regularly eat together. The heads of the big houses A, B, C, and D eat alone or together or on the verandas of their respective huts, but the young men eat in the *nsaka*. Of these there were 12, of whom 4 were generally away working during the week, leaving 9 regular eating mates B4, 6, and 7, C4 and 8, D10, and E3, 5 and F6, without counting the small boys who hung round the edge of the shelter waiting for bits. The women who supplied these men, in spite of being so closely related, seemed to make no effort to organize the daily supply of food to the *nsaka*. Each sent when she possibly could. Thus on some days two baskets reached the shelter, on others six, and the average daily consumption of each individual varied from 0·1 lb. of flour per day to 1·5 lb.

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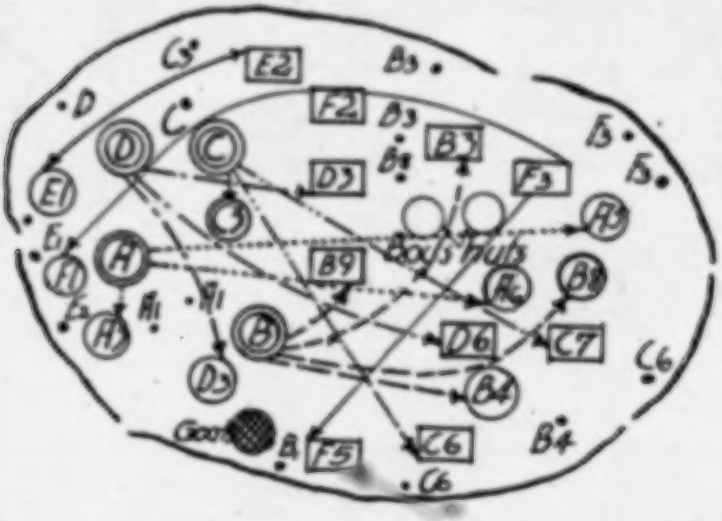
This rather detailed account of the distribution of food in a single Bemba village shows the extent to which sociological factors —the legal obligations of kinship and hospitality and the symbolism of giving and taking food-supplies—actually do affect the amount of food eaten by each individual in a community living as near the subsistence level as a number of African tribes do at the present day.

[62]



KASAKA VILLAGE
September 1934

Huts with verandas
Huts without verandas
Granaries
Goat pen

Enlarged section of plan on page 167 showing huts composing different matrilocal groups.

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Tables showing Number of Eaters and Individual Intake of Flour Per Day in Two Family Groups, A and B, *Kasaka Village.*

13 September to 2 October, 1934

Note 1. Man value obtained by allotting the figure 1·0 for each adult man, 0·8 for each woman or adolescent boy or girl, 0·6 for each child of either sex between 6 and 12, 0·4 for each child under 6 (called infant in this case).

Note 2. Abbreviations used: s.i.l. = son-in-law.
pot. = potatoes.
flr. = flour.
gr.-nuts = ground-nuts.

Note 3. The flour used is millet flour in every case.

FAMILY A. KASAKA

Permanent Group: 2 men, 2 women, 1 adolescent girl, 1 child, 1 infant. Total man value: 5·4

Date	*Total man value*	*Remarks*	*Amount of food*	*Indiv. intake of flour*	*Meals*	*Remarks*
Sept. 13	10·8	7 mourning relatives entertained.	10 lb. flr., 6 lb. meat, 2 lb. cow-pea leaves (fresh), ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·9 lb.	2 meals.	..
„ 14	10·0	Unexpected visiting relatives (3 men, 2 women, 1 child) and stranger claiming hospitality from headman. Host refuses to eat, as food is short.	10 lb. flr. Remains of yesterday's relish.	0·9 lb. ∞	2 meals.	..

„ 15	3·6	Visitors gone. S.i.l. (F6) and wife away.	10 lb. pot.	..	1 meal.	No relish available in daughter's absence (A5). No porridge cooked.
„ 16	6·4	S.i.l.'s friend cooked for.	5 lb. flr., 2 lb. cow-pea leaves (fresh), 2 lb. pot.	0·6 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	A5 given flr. to cook for husband.
„ 17	5·4	Headman told he cannot invite visitors, as too little relish.	5 lb. flr., ½ lb. orchid roots, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·9 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	A5 grinds by herself. Relish dug by children.
„ 18	3·6	Mother.	4 lb. flr., ½ lb. orchid roots, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	1·1 lb.	1 meal.	A5 cooks for husband, sisters, and brother.
„ 19	6·4	Visiting school teacher fed.	4 lb. flr., 2 lb. cow-pea leaves (fr.), ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·6 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	A5 cooks and finds relish.
„ 20	3·6	No visitors. S.i.l. and wife away.	5 lb. pot.	..	2 pot. snacks.	A5 away. NaMarya too tired to look for relish.
„ 21	6·6	2 friends of headman invited.	5 lb. flr., ½ lb. dried peas.	0·7 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	..
„ 22	6·4	2 guests staying in village.	5 lb. flr., 2 lb. wild spinach (fresh), ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·8 lb.	1 meal.	..
„ 23	3·6	S.i.l. and wife away.	9 lb. flr., ½ lb. dried peas, 4 lb. pot.	2·0 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	..
„ 24	3·6	Ditto.	6½ lb. flr., ½ lb. cow-peas (dried), 3 lb. meat	1·7 lb.	2 meals.	Beer brewing all day.

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Date	*Total man value*	*Remarks*	*Amount of food*	*Indiv. intake of flour*	*Meals*	*Remarks*
Sept. 25	3·6	S.i.l. and wife away.	12 lb. pot.	..	2 pot. snacks.	No porridge cooked—tired from brewing.
„ 26	5·6	2 men visitors.	5 lb. flr., 2 lb. cassava leaves (fr.), ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·9 lb.	..	..
„ 27	5·6	Ditto.	9½ lb. flr., 6 lb. meat.	1·7 lb.	..	..
„ 28	8·4	2 men visitors. Prospective s.i.l. fed.	6½ lb. flr., 10 lb. meat.	0·6 lb.	2 meals and 1 extra for visitors only.	..
„ 29	4·6	Housewife away.	4½ lb. flr., 2 lb. cow-pea leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts, meat left over.	0·9 lb.	1 meal, 1 snack of remains.	Housewife away. Daughter (A5) does cooking.
„ 30	5·4	Housewife back.	5½ lb. flr., 3 lb. pot. Meat left over.	1·0 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	Beer ready for drinking.
Oct. 1	5·4	..	5 lb. flr., 2 lb. cassava leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·9 lb.	1 meal. Beer.	..

FAMILY B. MALALO

Permanent Group: 3 men, 3 women, 1 adolescent boy, 2 children. Total man value: 7·4

Sept. 13	10·6	2 men visitors extra plus a s.i.l. whose wife was away, a daughter tabooed cooking and her four children.	6 lb. flr., 8 lb. meat, 10 lb. pot.	0·7 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	..

„ 14	11·6	3 men visitors.	9 lb. flr., meat left over.	0·7 lb.	1 meal.	No pot. snack, since children refuse to dig pot.
„ 15	7·6	..	4 lb. flr., meat left over, 6 lb. porridge.	0·5 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	Less cooked because young women away doing tribute labour.
„ 16	8·2	..	7 lb. flr., 2 lb. cow-pea leaves (fr.), ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·9 lb.	1 meal.	..
„ 17	5·2	2 men visitors arrive.	5½ lb. flr., 1 lb. cow-pea leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts, 8 lb. pot.	0·9 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	Daughter (B8) given flr. to cook for husband. Young girls fend for themselves, as they refused to grind. Housewife eats alone with husband.
„ 18	5·2	..	5 lb. flr., 2 lb. cow-pea leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·8 lb.	1 meal.	..
„ 19	7·2	S.i.l. home for night with friend and sent meal.	6 lb. flr., 3 lb. cassava leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	0·6 lb.	1 meal.	..
„ 20	5·2	..	3½ lb. flr., 6 pot.	..	Pot. snack only. Flour saved.	..
„ 21	6·6	..	5 lb. flr., ½ lb. beans, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	1·3 lb.	2 meals.	2 meals, as flr. from yesterday eaten.
„ 22	6·6	..	4½ lb. flr., 3 lb. cassava leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts, 4 lb. pot.	0·7 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	..

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Date	*Total man value*	*Remarks*	*Amount of food*	*Indiv. intake of flour*	*Meals*	*Remarks*
Sept. 23	11·0	..	5 lb. flr., 3 lb. cow-pea leaves, ¾ lb. gr.-nuts, 6 lb. pot.	0·4 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	..
„ 24	9·4	..	5 lb. flr., 10 lb. meat, 4 lb. pot.	0·5 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	Sufficient meat for 2 meals but game brought in too late.
„ 25	6·4	..	Flr. and meat left over. 4 lb. pot.	..	1 meal.	No grinding. Eat yesterday's supply.
„ 26	11·8	Sends dish to son, as extra meat available.	5¾ lb. flr., 2 lb. meat, 8 lb. pot.	0·4 lb	1 meal, 1 pot. snack.	Gets small buck shot by son.
„ 27	6·6	..	6½ lb. flr., 12 lb. meat.	0·9 lb.	2 meals.	Anthropologists' meat divided.
„ 28	6·6	..	5 lb. flr., meat left over.	0·7 lb.	2 meals.	..
„ 29	6·6	..	5 lb. flr., meat left over.	0·7 lb.	2 meals.	..
„ 30	7·6	..	5¾ lb. flr., meat left over.	0·7 lb.	2 meals.	..
Oct. 1	6·6	..	4½ lb. flr., 2 lb. cassava leaves, ½ lb. gr.-nuts	0·6 lb.	1 meal. Beer	..
„ 2	9·4	Observer's 2 servants fed.	5 lb. flr., 2 lb. meat, 8 lb. pot.	0·5 lb.	1 meal, 1 pot. snack. Beer.	..
„ 3	9·0	Married daughter on visit.	1 lb. *cikanda* orchid, ½ lb. gr.-nuts.	..	1 small meal. Beer.	No flr. ground, as exhausted after beer.

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Table showing Number of Baskets of Food divided between Young Men (Kasaka, September 1937)

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Date	*No. of baskets of flour*	*No. of men*	*Amount of flour per head*
Sept. 13	1	8	0·1
,, 14	2	6	0·3
,, 15	2	8	0·2
,, 16	3	6	0·5
,, 17	0	6	0·0
,, 18	2	6	0·3
,, 19	6	8	0·7
,, 20	4	8	0·5
,, 21	4	6	0·6
,, 22	4	7	0·5
,, 23	4	8	0·5
,, 24	Beer	..	..
,, 25	3	5	0·6
,, 26	5	9	0·5
,, 27	6	8	0·7
,, 28	6	8	0·7
,, 29	6	4	1·5
,, 30	6	4	1·5

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PART IV

OWNERSHIP, BUDGETING, AND EXCHANGE

CHAPTER XI

OWNERSHIP RULES AND EDUCATION IN SHARING

•262 SO far we have limited our discussion to the problem of day-to-day catering, and have studied the variations in individual dietaries produced by the system of preparing and consuming food. But one of the most important nutritional difficulties in this area is the regular annual shortage. We must therefore go beyond the question of the daily distribution of foodstuffs to consider the traditional methods of allocating the year's supplies. After harvesting one season's grain, the Bemba householder has little or no chance of procuring additional stores until the next year, and his wife, unlike most European women living under modern industrial conditions, has to budget for a year rather than a week. This is a task in which she regularly fails, according to our standards, and it is the reasons for her failure that we now have to seek.

The shortage may be due to a variety of causes—under-production with an insufficient margin of surplus, misuse of supplies by waste or by an excessive brewing of beer, or sheer inability to estimate future needs. Of these it is obvious that the first is the chief difficulty. From the figures given on p. 178–82 it will be seen that the Bemba produce on an average only enough grain to give them under 1 lb. of flour a day with no allowance for beer making; and that their supply of leguminous crops runs out in a few months. But the causes of under-production will be examined later, after the people's agricultural methods have been described.

This chapter will be limited to a discussion of the way in which the Bemba actually use the crops they customarily reap. What, for instance, are the tribal rules of ownership of food, that is to say, the householder's rights to consume or dispose of it in any way he pleases, and to protect it from other members of the community? To what extent is this people able to estimate quantities accurately and thus to calculate the amount of food they are likely to require over a given time interval? What is their whole cultural attitude towards the accumulation of foodstuffs, and the value they

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attach to stores of grain and vegetables as distinct from other forms of wealth. If we are anxious to study the yearly intake of the Bemba as distinct from their daily, and the seasonal variation in supplies instead of the day-to-day changes, all these different social and economic aspects must be discussed. The white man's despair at the African's apparent lack of foresight, whether in producing, eating, or selling his foodstuffs, makes it imperative to analyse just this type of fact.

Ownership of Garden Crops.

The food-supplies a Bemba owns consist of the crops standing in his garden and the millet or vegetables stored in his granary. Of these the crop of millet itself is individually owned. In fact, in the case of a new garden the natives seem to believe that there is some particularly close connexion, of an almost magical nature, between the owner and the patch of ground he has just cleared of bush. Although a man can lend his garden to another in the second or third year, or even sell the crops on it, he should do neither of these things in the case of the first-year patch (*citemene*), and I noticed that Bemba explaining this custom added in a particularly serious voice, 'because he is the owner' (*umwine*). The garden-beds round a village, on the other hand, are often considered the property of the wife, since she usually digs them, and either she or the husband has rights of disposal of the crops grown on them according to the labour each has spent on them.

Individual rights over particular crops depend on the nature of the plant and the time it ripens. A man's wife reaps the millet in his garden with any one whom she may invite to help her, but no other relatives of the family, however close, may start this work without her permission, and it involves a magic rite (*icibyalilo*)[1] which only she can perform. Crops of maize, Kaffir corn, or cucurbits grown on second- or third-year gardens are also individually owned. If a woman and a party of children went out to gather maize cobs I noticed that she and her own children entered the garden, while the others stayed outside. This is probably because this crop ripens in the hunger months, when it may be important to conceal from the village the number of cobs that are ready to pick. Close relatives of the family may step into a garden and help

[1] Cf. p. 299.

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CHAPTER XII

BUDGETING, WEALTH, AND EXCHANGE

Budgeting.

THE housewife's fundamental difficulties in budgeting will have been obvious from the previous account. In the first place she has to cater for an unknown number of eaters and, secondly, she may have to give some of her year's supply of grain to her elder relatives on demand. In these circumstances it is hard to understand how a woman manages to have any supplies left at all by the end of the season, and to anyone who listens to Bemba talking among themselves the problem seems even more insoluble. On the one hand the niggardly woman is constantly abused. As we saw, marriages are broken up if the mother-in-law does not provide generously for her son-in-law, and in a number of other relationships stinginess over food is equally fatal. On the other hand the housewife is criticized if she runs short of food at the end of the season. There is a special phrase—*cipumba ca muno mainsa* (a fool in the rainy season)—applied to an inefficient housekeeper of this type. A man is considered unfortunate if he is married to such a person, and women shrug their shoulders contemptuously when speaking of her. As we saw, the handling of the grain stores (*ukubansa*) is considered such a difficult art that a young girl is not allowed to undertake it until several years after marriage. Hence, however impossible it may be for the Bemba housewife to calculate her supplies exactly, there are evidently degrees of failure which the society does not tolerate. 262●

There are a number of factors which have to be considered under this general heading of budgeting, and all are relevant to a study of general economic incentives in this particular group. To begin with the Bemba woman cannot keep her granary store for the use of her own family as is the case in our society. The economic conditions under which she lives necessitate reciprocal sharing of foodstuffs, rather than their accumulation, and extend the individual's responsibility outside her own household. Plainly, therefore, it does not pay a Bemba woman to have very much more grain than her fellows. She would merely have to distribute it,

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and during the recent locust scourge the villagers whose gardens escaped destruction complained that they were not really better off than their fellows for 'our people come and live with us or beg us for baskets of millet'. But within small limits there is a difference between one housewife and another in her successful management of her grain bin. For one thing, as has been described, she generally cooks roughly the same amount of food however many visitors arrive. The careful housewife also restricts her brewing of beer to necessary occasions, i.e. for a ceremony or a working party, unless she has plenty of millet. Further, there are certain traditionally accepted ways by which she can avoid her tribal obligations. Within limits she can conceal her supplies. The young girls at their initiation ceremonies are in fact taught to hide a little food for their husbands at night, 'to give him the thing which is put by in the dark at night', and I have often seen women take a pot of beer and conceal it in a friend's granary on the reported arrival of some elderly relative. To refuse hospitality with a pot of beer sitting on the hearth would be an impossible insult, but a bland assertion that 'Alas, Sir, we poor wretches (*ifwe balanda*)! We have not a thing to eat here' is sometimes necessary. This would not be done in the case of a near relative, but only with a more distant kinsman of a classificatory type, or one of the well-known 'cadgers' of the family.

Bemba etiquette is also on the side of the housewife, since children are taught from their earliest years never to ask for food except in a near relative's hut, and not to look around a hut or into a granary. In fact, one definition of a witch or a wizard (*umuloshi*) is a person who comes and sits in your house and says, 'I expect you are going to cook soon. What a fine lot of meat you have to-day', or 'I expect the beer will be ready this afternoon', or some such remark. The girl at an initiation ceremony I witnessed was taught to sing a gesture song about a tortoise:

Fukwe pa fyakwe
Aingishyo mukoshi
Mu ci fwambaka;

i.e. 'The tortoise in his own house puts in his neck under his shell' of which the moral is said to be: 'Don't be like the tortoise which shrinks its head into its shell when it is at home, but when it is abroad, (i.e. in somebody else's house) puts its head out and asks for things or peers around.'

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Thus though the demands of near relatives are imperative, part of the art of good housekeeping consists in knowing where to draw the line without giving offence, and in successfully appraising the respective claims of different kinsmen, and it is this art which Bemba girls only acquire slowly by dint of joint co-operation in their mother's team.

Methods of Measurement.

Besides the means by which she satisfies her kinship obligations it is important to consider the actual methods by which quantities are measured in this community and hence how the needs of the year are estimated. The householder's powers of calculating her assets depend on the system of numeration used in this particular culture, the material apparatus for measuring, and last but not least, the incentives the people have to estimate the quantities of their supplies. In short, can the Bemba count, and do they consider it necessary to do so? The difference is of considerable importance practically. European systems of commensuration are so exact that a woman could reckon the daily intake of each member of her family with the accuracy of a laboratory feeding experiment, if she wanted to do so. But we know that in fact the planning of weekly food-supplies varies according to class and locality in every possible way, from the family with a large regular income that can buy large quantities of stores at a time and reckons to use similar amounts of different commodities each week, to those living under more precarious conditions that customarily drink beer on a Saturday evening, eat a large meat meal on Sunday, and exist for the rest of the week as best they can, running out for extra groceries as long as the money lasts. Among the Bemba the power of calculating quantities is far less exact, and the incentive to estimate nutritional needs precisely is even less than in our own community.

The Bemba system of numerals is very similar to that employed by the other Bantu peoples—that is to say numbers up to ten are expressed by words and the use of the fingers arranged in a series of different positions, increase in quantity being emphasized by a rising tone of the voice. The four fingers are used in counting with the thumb folded in to the centre of the hand. Thus the index finger raised alone on the right hand means one, the index and second fingers joined means two, the third finger raised with

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CALENDAR OF SEASONAL ACTIVITIES

Bemba months	*English equivalents*	*Weather*	*Food-supply*	MEN			WOMEN		
				Millet	*Subsidiary*	*Other activities*	*Gardening*		*Other activities*
Kabengele kanono	January	Heavy rain	Hunger month	..	Mound-digging and sowing	*Fishing*. Traps and nets set on flooded banks	..	Mound digging and sowing	Collecting mushrooms and caterpillars.
Kabengele kakalamba	February	,,	Hunger month. Cucurbits ripe	Fencing gardens	,, ,,	Build houses (new village)	..	,, ,,	,, ,,
Kutumpu	March	Rain slackening	Subsidiary crops ripe	..	,, ,,	,, ,,	Harvest (maize)	..	Collecting caterpillars.
Shinde	April	Rains cease	Early millet ripe	..	..	Fish weirs set	Harvest (millet—early)	..	..
Kapepo kanono	May	Cold weather	Ample food-supply	Tree-cutting	..	,, ,,	Harvest (millet—main crop)	Harvest (ground-nuts)	..
Kapepo kakalamba	June	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	..	..	,, ,,	,, ,,	..
Cikungulu pepo	July	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	..	..	Piling branches		
Lipukutu lunono	August	Hot weather	,, ,,	,, ,,	Dry weather sowing	Fish-poisoning. Net-hunting begins	,, ,,	,, ,,	..
Lipukutu lukalamba	September	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	Fish-poisoning. Net-hunting	,, ,,	Dry weather sowing	Collecting wild spinaches. Fish-poisoning.
Lusuba lunono	October	,, ,,	Less food	Firing gardens	..	,, ,,	Firing gardens	,, ,,	,, ,,
Lusuba lukalamba	November	Early rains	Getting scarce	,, ,,	Mound digging and sowing	Fish-spearing and trapping on flats	..	..	Fish-poisoning.
Mupundu	December	Mid-rains	Hunger month	Sowing main crop	,, ,,	..	Sowing main crop	Mound digging and sowing	Fruits.
Cinshi kubili	No English equivalent. The 13th month	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	,, ,,	Collecting mushrooms.
									,, ,,

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APPENDIXES

TABLE A

Chief Bemba Foodstuffs and Methods of Preparation

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(The most common methods of preparation are preceded by an asterisk (*).)

English name	*Native term*	*Methods of preparation*	*Native term*
CEREALS			
1. *Finger millet* (Eleusine corecana)	*Amale*	1. *Flour made into porridge	*Ubwali.*
		2. *Flour made into thin gruel	*Umusunga.*
		3. *Flour made into beer	*Ubwalua.*
		4. Flour made into a scone (for journeys only)	*Icifuba.*
2. *Kaffir corns*	*Amasaka*	1. *Flour made into porridge	*Ubwali.*
(*a*) Sorghum spp.	*Sonkwe*	2. Flour made into beer	*Ubwalua.*
	Kancebele	3. Whole grains boiled	*Umusaku.*
(*b*) Saccharine	*Icisale*	1. Sweet stalks chewed	*Imise.*
3. *Maize* (Zea mays)	*Nyanje*	1. *Green maize boiled on cob	*Ukumvenena* (*shya mituntumina*).
		2. *Green maize roasted on cob	*Ukuoca mu mapapa.*
		3. Flour from green maize used for porridge	*Icimfumpa.*
		4. Flour from green maize used for beer (rare).	*Ubwalua* (rare).
		5. Grains pounded and added to water. This milky fluid boiled. It sets into a 'blanc mange'	
		6. Dried grains boiled and pounded	*Icisembwe* (rare).
		7. Dried grains boiled only	*Umunkuluto* (rare).
		8. Very young corn boiled and eaten cob and all	*Shya miyeye.*
4. *Bulrush millet* (Pennisetum typhcideum)	*Ububele* (rare)	1. Ground into flour	
ROOT CROPS			
1. *Cassava* (Manihot utilissima)	*Kalundwe*	1. *Flour made into porridge	*Ubwali.*
		2. Roasted in chunks and dipped in ground-nut sauce	
2. *Sweet potatoes* (Ipomoea batatas)	*Icumbu* (plur. *Ifyumbu*) Eaten alone	1. *Boiled and eaten alone	*Ukuipika.*[1]
		2. *Roasted in ashes	*Ukufumbika.*
		3. *Dried potatoes (*fyafubululwa*) boiled with salt as relish	*Nsemwa.*
3. *Livingstone potatoes*, Hausa or Finger (Coleus esculentus)	*Mumbu* Eaten alone	1. *Boiled and eaten alone	*Ukuipika.*[1]
		2. *Stewed with ground-nut sauce	*Ukusashila*
PULSES			
1. *Ground-nuts* (Arachis hypogaea)	*Mbalala* Relish	1. *Pounded into sauce to add to relishes	*Ntwilo.*
	Relish	2. Ground-nuts ground and cooked into a cake and stamped hard with salt. Lasts two months. Used as relish	*Icikonho.*
		3. Nuts heated on a potsherd	*Ukusalula.*[2]
	Eaten alone	4. Ground-nuts eaten fresh	*Muntomfwe.*

[1] *Ukuipika* merely means to cook with water. [2] *Ukusalula* means to heat without water.

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English name	*Native term*		*Methods of preparation*	*Native term*
		Eaten alone	5. Nuts heated, pounded, cooked with water and pounded into a gruel	*Umusense.*
			6. *Nuts heated, pounded, heated again until oil floats to top. Used to oil the skin	*Amafuta ya Mhalala.*
2. *Beans* (Phaseolus spp.)	*Icilemba*	Relish	1. *Fresh pods boiled without salt	*Imifoba.*
		Relish	2. *Dried seeds stewed to form a purée—salt added	*Imintipu.*
3. *Ground-bean* (Voandzeia subterranea)	*Ntoyo*	Relish	3. *Pods half dried and cooked with water	*Mwitomfwe.*
4. *Cow-pea* (Vigna unguiculata)	*Ifilanda*	Relish	4. *Fresh leaves stewed as relish with ground-nut sauce if possible	*Umusalu.*
5. *European pea* (Pisum Sativum)	*Ntongwe*	Relish	5. *Dried leaves stewed with native soda, and ground-nut sauce if possible	*Umusalu.*
		Eaten alone	6. *Purée of stewed dried beans or peas pounded into a cake, and cooked when required with very little water and salt	*Icitata.*
		Eaten alone	7. Fresh peas or ground-beans cooked in pod without water	*Ubusalula nkwangwa.*
		Relish	8. Dried leaves softened with native soda cooked on pot-sherd with salt and water	*Ubusalula nkwangwa.*
CUCURBITS				
1. *Pumpkins* (Cucurbita spp.)	*Icipushi* (plur. *Ifipushi*)	Eaten alone	1. *Boiled and eaten alone	
			2. Seeds heated in pot as relish	*Nsoko.*
		Relish	3. *Fresh leaves stewed (cf. cassava leaves)	*Icibwabwa.*
2. *Edible gourds* (Lagenaria sp.)	*Mungu* (plur. *Myungu*)		1. *Boiled and eaten alone	
3. *Cucumbers* (a) (Cucumis sativus)	*Icibimbi* (plur. *Ifibimbi*)		*Eaten raw	
(b) Small cucumber (probably *Cucumis ficifolius*)	*Amankolobwe*	Eaten alone	1. *Boiled whole 2. Boiled to form a hot drink 3. Skins cooked with native soda	
MISCELLANEOUS				
1. *Chillies and Capsicums* (Capsicum annuum vars.)	*Mpilipili*		Used as flavouring to relish	
2. *Solanaceous fruits* (Solanum naumanii)	*Mpwa*	Relish	Stewed as relish	*Ukuipika.*
UNCULTIVATED PLANTS				
1. *Wild spinaches* (not identified)	*Umusalu* Many varieties including: *Pupwe, Candabemba, Lusahatuha, Kapalala, Cinsanki, Tata, Caonde, Kabonwe*	Relish	1. *Fresh leaves stewed with ground-nut sauce and salt 2. *Dried leaves stewed with native soda	*Ukusashila.* *Ukuipika.*
2. *Wild orchid*, (Orchis mabembo?)	*Icikanda*	Relish	1. *Stewed with ground-nut sauce plus salt 2. Dried into a cake with salt	*Icikanda.*

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English name	*Native term*	*Method of preparation*	*Native term*
3. *Edible fungi*, 30 kinds (cf. E. B. H. Goodall, op. cit., p. 122)	*Boa* Relish	1. Stewed with ground-nut sauce	*Ukusashila*
	Relish	2. Stewed	*Ukupika*
4. *Fruits*			*Mukola wa.*
(a) *Wild plums* (Anisophyllea sp.)	*Mfungo*	1. Eaten raw	*Mfungo.*
		2. *Made into a drink	
(b) *Loquots* (Uapaka Kirkiana)	*Several varieties: Manuku, Mupangwa, Mukokola, Musokobwe*, &c.	1. Eaten raw	
		2. *Made into a drink	*Ulumembwe.*
(c) *Mpundu fruit* (Parinarium mobola)	*Mpundu*	1. Eaten raw	
		2. *Made into a drink	
MEAT AND FISH			
1. *Game* (mostly buck, pig, wild pigeons, guinea-fowl, duck)	*Nama* (i.e. 'meat')	1. *Slow stewing	*Ukupika.*
		2. Roasted on sticks by fire (journey method)	
		3. Cooked dry on a potsherd	*Ukusalula.*
Chickens (domestic) short-legged = *Nkuku*	*Nkoko*	" "	"
2. *Fish* (cf. Report of C. K. Ricardo and R. T. Owen)	*Ifisabi* (plur. *amasabi*)	1. *Slow stewing	*Ukupika.*
		2. Cooked dry on a potsherd	*Ukusalula.*
3. *Miscellaneous*			
Caterpillars	*Ifishimu*, 6 chief types: *Icipumi, Mumpa, Nsenga, Namusuluka, Mpumbata, Fitolo*	1. *Slow stewing with ground-nut sauce	*Ukusashila.*
		2. Cooked dry	*Ukusalula.*
Flying Ants	*Nhate*	" "	"
Locusts	*Amakanta*	" "	"
Crickets	*Nyense*	" "	"
SALT			
1. *Cibwa salt* (formula on p. 410)	*Umucele*	Used in cooking dried pulses, dried leaves, dishes cooked with ground-nut sauce, sweet potatoes, boiled	
2. *Grass salt* (not analysed)	"	" " "	
3. *European salt*	"		
4. *Cooking soda* from bark of tree (not analysed)	*Ifishikisa*	Used for softening dried leaf relishes	

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TABLE B

Composition of Bemba Foods

(*Kindly prepared by* DR. E. M. WIDDOWSON)

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	Protein	*Fat*	*Carbohydrate*	*Calcium*	*Phosphorus*	*Iron*	*Source of figures*
	gm.	gm.	gm. (per 100 gm.)	gm.	gm.	mgm.	
Beans, dried	23	1·8	60	0·15	0·46	10·5	Sherman, 1937.
Beans, haricot	21	0	46	0·18	0·31	6·7	McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Beer (per pint)	4	0·6	12	0·23	0·17	15·5	Analysis of Bemba specimen. Also contains 27 grams alcohol.
Caterpillars (dried)	65	5·0	0	0·16	0·77	7·3	Analysis of Bemba specimen.
Chicken (including waste)	13	4·8	0	0·01	0·13	1·0	McCance and Shipp, 1933
Cikanda	1	0	9	0·14	0·02	1·2	As spring onion. McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Cow-peas (dried)	21	1·4	61	0·10	0·46	7·9	Sherman, 1937.
Cucumber	1	0	2	0·02	0·02	0·3	McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Fish, fresh	16	5·9	0	0·06	0·20	1·0	McCance and Shipp, 1933.
Fish, dried	32	11·8	0	0·12	0·40	2·0	Calculated from fresh fish.
Flour, maize	8	6·7	72	Trace	0·41	2·2	Analysis of Bemba specimen.
Flour, millet	7	1·4	75	0·32	0·32	2·4	" "
Flour, cassava	2	0·3	87	0·05	0·06	1·2	" "
Gourds, fresh	Trace	0	1	0·01	0·01	0·2	As marrow. McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Ground-nuts	28	49·0	9	0·06	0·37	2·0	As peanuts. McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Locusts	8	7·9	0	0·16	0·77	7·3	Orr and Gilks for protein, fat, and carbohydrate. Caterpillar figures for calcium, phosphorus, and iron.
Leaves, fresh	3	0	1	0·14	0·04	2·2	Calculated from dried leaves.
Leaves, dried	26	0	11	1·44	0·37	22·1	Analysis of Bemba specimen.
Meat, stewed	15	4·4	0	Trace	0·11	2·5	McCance and Shipp, 1933. ¼ values to allow for gravy.
Meat, venison (roast)	30	6·6	0	0·03	0·29	7·8	McCance and Shipp, 1933.
Mpundu fruit	1	0	7	0·02	0·02	0·4	As apricot. McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Mpwa fruit	1	0	3	0·01	0·01	0·4	As egg-plant. McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Mushrooms, fresh	2	0	0	Trace	0·14	1·0	McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Peas, dried	22	0	50	0·06	0·30	4·7	" "

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	Protein	Fat	Carbohydrate	Calcium	Phosphorus	Iron	Source of figures
	gm.	gm.	gm. (per 100 gm.)	gm.	gm.	mgm.	
Potatoes, sweet (including waste)	1	0	18	0·02	0·04	0·5	McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Potatoes, *Mumbu* or Livingstone	2	0	3	0·03	0·03	0·4	As Jerusalem artichokes. McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Pumpkin, fresh (including waste)	1	0	3	0·03	0·02	0·3	McCance, Widdowson, and Shackleton, 1936.
Tripe	18	3·0	0	0·13	0·13	1·6	McCance and Shipp, 1933.

Local (Cibwa) Salt from Mpika
(analysed by McCance and Widdowson)

Na	K	Ca	Mg	Fe	Cl	SO_4	Cu	Mn
(Gm. per 100 gm.)							(Mgm. per 100 gm.)	
32·50	2·405	0·313	0·038	0·045	45·60	21·30	0·25	0·70

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3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
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[881] with shrieks of delighted laughter, 'Here come the bridegrooms.' The two women imitated the swaggering gait of young gallants, and pretended to speak in bass voices. They carried male symbols —the bow and arrow, the red cam wood powder of the successful warrior and lion-killer, and the salt, which the husband had to fetch for the household in the old days. The twigs round their heads were said to represent the circlets worn formerly by magicians, and the leaf cups might well have been fertility symbols, though I did not ask.

We formed into a triumphant procession as we neared the village. Everyone carried branches or imitation bundles of firewood on their backs. Even the children who ran in front, shouting, [482] had tiny faggots strapped on their backs. The mock bridegrooms followed and behind them came the *banacisungu* with the emblem bundles strapped on to their shoulders.

As we got near the first houses, the two girls were made to crawl single file with some of their companions, and then they were hidden by a couple of mats carried like a screen round them. The women waved their branches to and fro and began to surge first forward and then backward—four steps forward very slowly behind the crawling girls, and then four steps backward. They sang again and again (No. 15).

'*Mark one step after the other*
Let us not turn back.'

('The crawling backwards is to teach the girls obedience.')[1]

The mother-daughter rite

The procession wound interminably on, forward and back, forward and back, until we reached the house of one of the girl's mothers. Here the *banacisungu* were told to lie down and to put their heads first on a bunch of sorghum and then on some clusters of finger millet. These are the two most important cereal foods of the tribe. The seeds had been thrown there by the girl's mother. [262]

(The mother says, 'I shall get every kind of seed and give it to my child.' This sentence was repeated by several women with great

[1] *Subsequent interpretation.* A *nacimbusa*: 'It is to teach the girls they have to go back if they have made a mistake. A.C. 'What you have gone through is over. You have entered a new world, but you mustn't forget and fall back.'

encouraged and there are now a few herds in the valley. Horses and mules are lacking. The donkey ridden by Gamitto when he made his entry in 1830 was the first of the species to be seen in the country.(1) The villagers keep poultry and some small stock, mainly goats and sheep.

FISHING

Fish abound in the Luapula, the riverside lagoons and Lakes Mweru and Mofwe. Livingstone collected the vernacular names of thirty-nine species caught in Lake Mweru.(2) Some fishing goes on all the year round but the season, when the men move to the fishing camps on the river islands, extends from September to January. In the shallow marshland pools the fish are speared while laying their eggs. In flowing water they are trapped in conical wickerwork baskets set in rocky falls or in the openings in a weir.(3) On Lake Mweru they are caught from canoes with hook and line. On the Luapula the people go out in their dugouts at night and drive the fish into seine-nets (*ubukonde*) by hitting the surface of the water with wooden discs attached to poles.(4) Large-scale fishing is done with drag-nets (*umukwau*) which require several men to pull them. Formerly nets were made by men from barkcloth cord. Nowadays nylon and cotton nets are used. Vegetable poisons and stupefacients, now banned, were employed in the past.

HUNTING

Hunting and fowling are spare-time activities. Elephants and buffaloes, which in Livingstone's time used to be chased into the Mofwe mudflats during the rainy season and killed in great numbers,(5) are no longer found in Kazembe's country though some still remain on the Belgian Congo side. Large herds of lechwe antelope roam the swamp country beyond the inhabited belt. Fire-arms have displaced the traditional weapons.

DIET

The basic foodstuffs are cassava(6) and fish. Game, poultry, fruit and wild bees' honey, supplement the diet. Cassava is soaked in water, peeled and sun-dried for storing. The root, after being pounded and ground on a stone, is made into porridge and flavoured with groundnuts or other relish. Sweet cassava is eaten roasted.(7) Fish is consumed fresh or dried, game fresh or smoked. Fish, when dried in the sun or over a fire, will keep for three months. Water-lily roots, on which, according to tradition, the aboriginal pygmies fed, are considered a delicacy. Native-made alcoholic beverages were millet beer(8) (still made), *Borassus* palm wine, mead(9) and a spirit distilled from maize.(10) Oil is expressed from palm fruit(11) and from groundnuts and vinegar used to be made from bananas.(12) Tobacco is taken as snuff and smoked in pipes.(13) *Bhang* (hemp), was

(1) Burton, op.cit., p.252.
(2) Livingstone, op.cit., p.245.
(3) Brelsford, 2, 1947, pp.70, 71.
(4) Holmes, 1925, p.26.
(5) Livingstone, op.cit., pp.248, 276, 299.
(6) Burton, op.cit., p.40.
(7) ibid., p.101.
(8) ibid., p.43.
(9) Gamitto, II, p.26; Valdez, II, p.246.
(10) Bowdich, p.91.
(11) Livingstone, op.cit., pp.243, 278.
(12) ibid, p.272.
(13) ibid., p.251; Gamitto, I, p.401.